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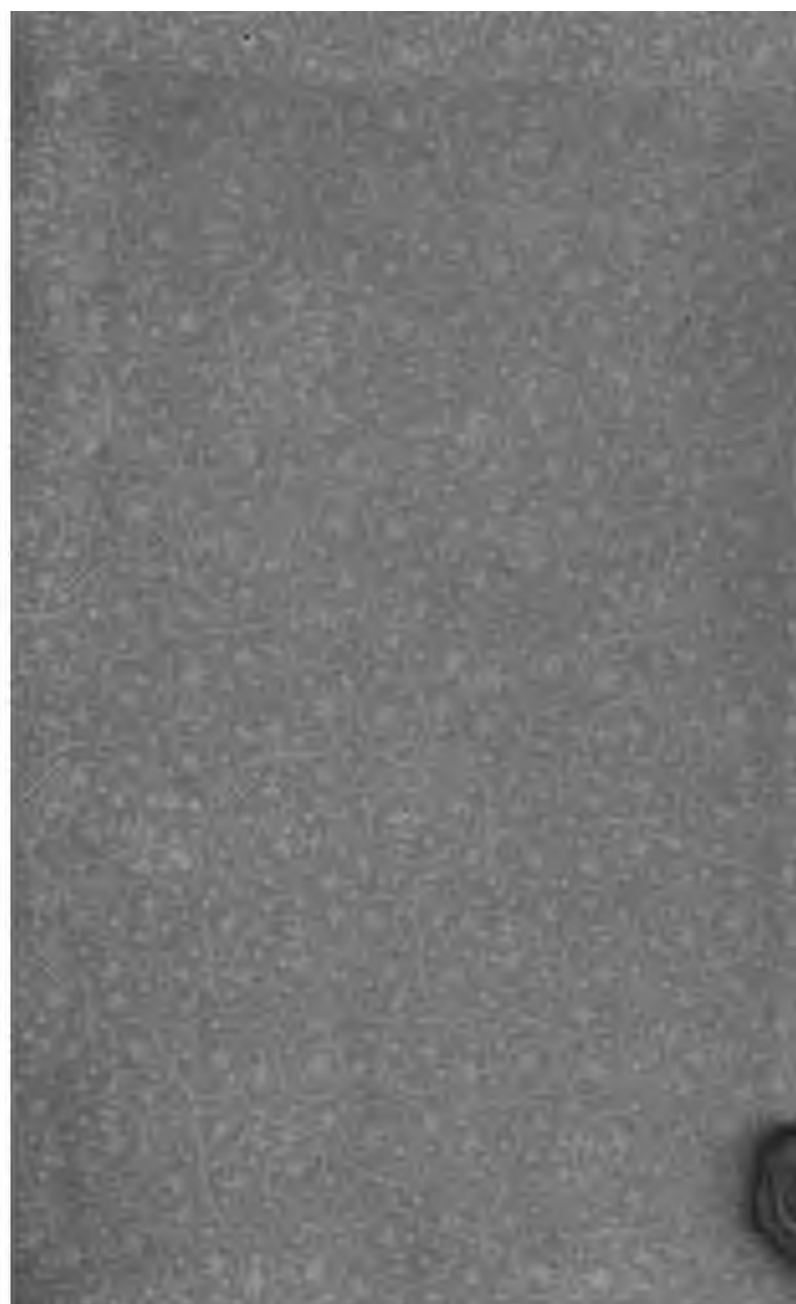
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THIRTY YEARS' EXPERIENCE

OF A MEDICAL OFFICER

IN THE

ENGLISH CONVICT SERVICE.

By

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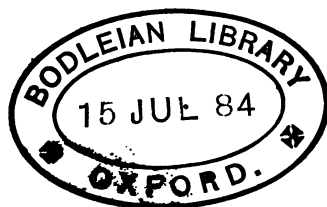
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Preface.

THE treatment of our criminal population has been a subject of close attention and much interest to men occupying the highest position as statesmen and philosophers, and to philanthropists imbued with the spirit which actuated John Howard in his noble and self-sacrificing exertions. Many good people of our own time have also offered suggestions for the management and reclamation of convicts ; but most of these plans, when tried, have failed to realize the expectations of their authors. This failure has been owing in a great measure to inexperience in matters regarding prisoners and prison life ; for without experience it is not easy to estimate the difficulties to be encountered.

Of the value of experience John Howard afforded a perfect example. He began by actual inspection of prisons and prisoners, obtained personal knowledge unique in its extent and minuteness, and then proceeded to suggest beneficial reforms, sanitary and disciplinary. His great example, by which we are now profiting, followed by that of others working in the same spirit, changed our convict prisons from being habitations of pestilence and vice to models of cleanliness, humane discipline, health, and good order.

To the late Sir Joshua Jebb much credit is due for the improvements that have taken place in more recent times. By working on sound principles in the construction and arrangement of prisons, as well as by his treatment of prisoners, he greatly promoted the health and reformation of criminals.

Let me add that his kind yet firm manner of dealing with prisoners made a deep impression on them, while his genial and courteous bearing toward those under him cannot fail to be remembered with pleasure.

Many humane persons since Sir Joshua's time have warmly advocated the cause of prisoners, seeking to improve their position during confinement, as well as on discharge. These efforts have often proved successful ; but it is very desirable to bear in mind that in carrying out any system prompted by humanity everything approaching to mistaken sympathy with its objects should be avoided, as suggesting to their minds excuses for their misdeeds, and tempting them to look upon themselves as ill-used individuals. This is perhaps the most important matter on which I could insist. Subjects less weighty, but none of them in my judgment trivial, are treated of in the body of this small work.

In submitting my experience and views to the public, I trust that I am furnishing useful materials and suggestions to others who may be able to enforce them with greater ability than I am conscious of possessing.

EDINBURGH, 1834.

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THIRTY YEARS

IN THE

ENGLISH CONVICT SERVICE.

CHAPTER I.

THE CONVICT SHIP.

I HAD been a surgeon in the Royal Navy for about fourteen years, and had seen service in different ships of war in the West Indies, and afterwards on other stations, when in 1850 I received an appointment as surgeon-superintendent of a convict ship—a duty which had for many years been intrusted to naval medical officers. Though the accommodation on ship-board, and the dietary, have been greatly improved of recent years, when compared with the state of things at the early period of transportation to Australia, the charge which devolves upon the medical officer, even under the most favourable conditions possible, is sufficiently onerous.

When we compare the magnitude and the great

prosperity of the colonies at the present time with the first settlement at Sydney in 1788, we cannot but be struck with their wonderful growth from that small beginning. Truly it is a proud instance of the energy and industry of our race.

A recent interesting work, entitled "The First Twenty Years of Australia," enters fully into the struggles and difficulties the earlier settlers had to contend with, and the deplorable privations they had to encounter, both during the long sea passage, and afterwards on landing.

We may realize what their sufferings were by referring to the statements of eye-witnesses. Governor Phillip, for instance, found the convicts who had landed at Port Jackson "emaciated" and "worn away" by long confinement and by want of food, or from both of these causes; and Dr. Whyte, the colonial surgeon, reports, in 1790, that of the nine hundred and thirty-nine males sent out by the last ships two hundred and sixty-one died on board, and fifty more since landing.

The convict ships in those days appear to have been destitute of all naval authority; for it is stated that Governor Hunter humanely suggested that a naval officer should be sent in each vessel. After mentioning a case that occurred in 1795 of a ship on which the convicts were put in irons during the long voyage, in consequence of some conjecture that they meant to seize the ship and murder the officers,

he says, "They look most wretched from their long confinement." In October 1802, the captain of a ship was put on his trial for shooting a number of convicts, whom he had suspected of intending to get up a mutiny. He was found guilty, and was sentenced to pay a fine of £500. In another case, the convicts attempted to murder some of their fellow-prisoners, and were fired on.

These and other accounts of the miserable condition of the convicts after a long passage, close confinement, and insufficient nourishment, reminded me not a little of the emaciated slaves in a vessel we captured off Cuba. Owing to the dreadful stench below, I had to spend about a month on the deck of this ship, in affording what assistance I could to the miserable creatures, who had been cooped up in the loathsome hold for months. The horrid sight we encountered on boarding this vessel would almost surpass belief. I will not attempt to describe it. That, however, was in 1838. Now, it is to be hoped, this foul blot on civilization and Christianity is on the eve of extinction. The privations the convicts had to endure on these protracted voyages, as well as subsequently on shore from famine and the difficulties and troubles caused by the natives, were not much less than those to which slaves were subjected; but they were greatly mitigated in the course of a few years. By liberal supplies of various necessary articles from home,

backed by the indefatigable exertions of the authorities in the preservation of order and in the encouragement of industry, the state of affairs began to assume a brighter aspect, and the foundation was laid of the prosperous and progressive colonies of which England has such good reason to be proud.

At the time of my appointment in 1850, the service had been for a long time carried on very successfully, and in a praiseworthy and humane manner; and the arrangements made to insure the health and comfort of the convicts, as far as they are compatible with safety and security, left little to be desired.

The ship, which was chartered for the conveyance of two hundred and sixty-one convicts, and a guard of thirty pensioners, including three non-commissioned officers, was of about seven hundred tons, roomy, well ventilated, and lofty between decks, with an excellent captain, officers, and crew. A large space below the poop was set apart for the accommodation of the guards and their families, consisting of twenty-six women and fifty-three children. There was an entrance from the quarter-deck, and the place was fitted up in a very comfortable manner, with sleeping berths on either side. The prison-deck was also fitted up very carefully with separate sleeping berths, so constructed as to admit of the supervision of the occupants. There was a surgery, which was conveniently situated; and there was also a small detached prison, strongly con-

structed, for the reception of twelve incorrigible prisoners destined for Norfolk Island.

The provisions, including preserved meats and potatoes, were of the best description, and there was also a liberal supply of wine and lime-juice, so that the whole arrangements of the Deptford authorities appeared to me very satisfactory.

The ship was inspected by the captain-superintendent on the 24th of July 1850, and we sailed to Woolwich Arsenal the same day.

After embarking a portion of the pensioner guard, we received on board convicts from the *Warrior* hulk and from Millbank, and then proceeded down the river to Tilbury Fort. There we embarked the remainder of the guard, and also twenty-five women and fifty-two children.

On inspecting them the previous day, I found one of the children suffering from measles, and consequently refused to allow the child and its mother to be taken on board; but the poor mother, being determined to accompany her husband, managed to get smuggled on board during the night with the sick child. The disease, as might be expected, soon spread in the limited space, and with the exception of a family of five, berthed near the ventilator, all the children were seized; and as many of them were in a weakly condition, three deaths occurred.

We next anchored off Portsmouth, where more convicts were embarked, all of whom were carefully

searched as they came on board. Portland was our final place of call, and from that prison we received a batch of convicts, including a military officer, who had excited unusual indignation by striking Her Majesty with a stick. The case of the officer who committed this outrage will be alluded to again in my remarks on lunatic criminals. The whole of the prisoners, two hundred and sixty-one in number, were young or middle-aged, and, with few exceptions, had a healthy appearance. This was more especially the case with those embarked from Portland, which prison was then under the governorship of the late Captain Whitty, a most able and estimable man. When the prisoners were drawn up for my inspection they appeared quite equal to a company of infantry. The twelve incorrigible prisoners of whom I have spoken gave a specimen of their character by jumping about in their irons when they came on board; but as this bravado was treated with indifference, they soon settled down when consigned to their strong prison.

The same evening, when the sergeant-major came to report that all was right, he handed me a pair of pistols, with a small package of ammunition. To show that such precautions were necessary, I may mention that the chain locker was by some oversight included in their prison, and that, shortly after the embarkation of these daring characters, they managed, while the ship was at anchor, and

when the locker was almost empty, to tear down the planking so as to effect an entrance into the store-room. This they did though still in irons. I had previously given them a little kindly advice, which they appeared to take well, and I was led to hope that they would go on quietly. This, however, was not the case. They proved very violent; and as it was absolutely necessary to check such conduct, the ringleaders were punished. From that time they ceased to give any trouble, and shortly after getting to sea, they were released from their irons.

As I have already stated, the majority of the prisoners were men of a very superior description. The greater number were young and robust, and several were from the agricultural districts. Those embarked at Portland had evidently been selected with great care by Captain Whitty, to whom I had good reason to feel thankful for his excellent management, especially on reaching the cold southern latitude. There it was necessary to issue warm clothing; and in the case of the prisoners selected by him each man had been properly fitted, but in the other cases it was wofully different. A great amount of grumbling and discontent was the result.

When all the prisoners had been embarked, they were divided into messes; and one out of each mess, styled "captain," was held responsible for its cleanliness and order. There were also selected from

among the prisoners as office-bearers a first chief overseer and his mate, four overseers of divisions, a surgery man and mate, four constables, two cooks with their two mates, a barber and two mates, and four clothesmen, who took charge of the washed clothes. All these men were carefully selected from the body of prisoners, and acted under the immediate and close supervision of the non-commissioned officers of the guard. They took the greatest interest in their duties, and were evidently pleased to be thought deserving of some confidence.

The following daily routine may interest the reader, even at this distance of time :—

At 5 A.M., cooks admitted on deck. From 5.30 A.M. to 7.30 A.M., prisoners allowed on deck by sections to wash themselves, to shave on Thursdays and Sundays, and to wash clothes on Wednesdays, an extra washing day being allowed while within the tropics. From 6 A.M. to 7.30 A.M., fresh water served out to cooks and messes. From 7.30 A.M. to 9 A.M., inmates of separate prison allowed on deck to wash and exercise. At 9 A.M., guard reported on the poop; the main prison cleared of the whole or part of its occupants, with beds and bags, according to the state of the weather; after the men had been mustered by divisions, one or two of each mess sent below with overseers to clean. At 10 A.M., meat inspected, tallied by captains of messes, and delivered to the cooks. At 10.30 A.M., prison

reported ready for inspection; then inspected, and the sick provided for. At 11 A.M., barracks inspected, sick visited, and any of the crew who were unwell prescribed for. At 12 noon, prisoners sent below; dinner reported ready, inspected, and served to the messes. From 12 noon to 2 P.M., inmates of separate prison allowed on deck for exercise. At 2 P.M., wine or lime-juice served out; inmates of the separate prison sent below, and those in the main prison sent on deck. At 3 P.M., provisions issued in the presence of a constable and two captains of messes in rotation; beef or pork put into steep. At 4 P.M., prisoners sent below to prayers; inmates of separate prison again on deck for one hour. At 5 P.M., all the prisoners below, and supper served; overseers and other office-bearers on deck till sunset. At 8 P.M., general inspection of the prisons and barracks; the sick visited. On Sunday, divine service at the usual hours.

The following general regulations, which were drawn up to be observed by the prisoners, may also prove interesting:—

1. No prisoner is on any pretence whatsoever to keep in his own possession money, goods, or other property, except such articles as may be allowed by me as suitable for the voyage.

2. Mutinous, insolent, or disrespectful conduct, by word or action, will be severely punished; likewise thieving, and other criminal acts.

3. Cursing and swearing, indecent words or songs, or any other immoral conduct, will also incur punishment. Gambling and the use of tobacco strictly prohibited.

4. No trafficking, changing, or converting to any other use than that for which it is issued, of any article of clothing or any necessities, will be permitted.

5. Great care must be taken of the bedding, clothing, and mess utensils; and any wanton injury of them, or of the benches, lashings, or fastenings, will assuredly be punished.

6. The prisoners are not to hold any intercourse with the guard or seamen, unless by particular permission; and they must carefully avoid being in the way, or interfering with any ship's duties going on, unless by my consent, and by desire of the ship's officers.

7. No prisoner is to come beyond the barricade, or get on the sides or rigging of the ship, without permission.

8. All the prisoners are to wash their faces, and hands and comb their hair every morning; to wash their feet every Thursday and Saturday in the colder latitudes, and every morning in the tropics.

9. The washing of the feet and mess utensils is always to be done on the lee-side of the deck, if possible. No washing or slopping on the prison-

deck or in the hatchways will be permitted, nor the towing of anything overboard.

10. There will be a washing day every Wednesday in the colder latitudes, and every Tuesday and Friday in the tropics, and no washing of clothes on other days, unless by special permission. On the days appointed, the clothes are to be well scrubbed or washed, rinsed, and wrung, and then delivered to the clothesman to be properly fastened on the line.

11. As soon as lights are placed, and the sentries posted in the hatchways, no loud speaking or noise whatsoever will be permitted.

12. Two prisoners are to take duty as night-watchmen in rotation; but overseers, hospital men, cooks, barbers, constables, and others employed during the day, are exempt from this duty. They are to seize any prisoner found out of his sleeping berth (unless for necessary purposes), or otherwise improperly employed, and to call on the constable on duty to identify him. They are also to report any one who makes a disturbance, and to see that water-closets are not improperly used. No one is to go to bed without his shirt upon him, and to have no other clothes on but that, unless by permission.

13. At the hour appointed for rising in the morning, every one is to roll up and fasten his bedding neatly, keeping it in its proper place, until ordered on deck; and when ordered down, it is to

be restored to its proper berth, ready for spreading at bed-time.

14. One in every mess is to act in rotation as assistant to the captain to clean the dishes and utensils, and to attend to the affairs of the mess under him. Those having offices in the prison are exempted from this duty.

15. One or two from each mess are in daily rotation to clean the prison, under the direction of the chief overseer, his mate, and the overseers of divisions.

16. Profanation of the Sabbath day will be punished, and the most becoming order and decorum are to be observed in coming to, attending on, and returning from, divine worship. No one insulting or ridiculing another on account of his religious tenets shall go unpunished.

17. Any one guilty of disobedience, or who does not readily obey the orders of the chief overseer, sub-overseers, constables, and other office-bearers, shall be punished; and the office-bearers are strictly enjoined to maintain order, and to report all irregularities, otherwise they will incur my displeasure. While punishment awaits the guilty, not only on board, but on arrival in the colony, good conduct will always be encouraged; and from the quiet and orderly behaviour of all in the main prison, I have every reason to hope that it will be maintained throughout the voyage. And on the arrival of the

ship at her destination I hope to have the satisfaction of endorsing all the "tickets of leave," and recommending the holders of the same to the favourable notice of his Excellency the Governor.

The habits of order, cleanliness, and regularity which the prisoners had acquired during their confinement were of immense advantage ; and I deem these three items of prison discipline of far greater importance in the reclamation of prisoners than any of the new ideas so often advanced by people wanting in practical experience.

In a very short time after getting to sea the greatest order and regularity prevailed, and the prison-deck was so clean in every part that it would have been difficult to detect a dirty spot. The mess tables and utensils were also very clean, and the iron hoops and the work for suspending the tables, formerly black and rusty, were polished like steel. All this was accomplished with very little trouble. It was helped by the emulation excited amongst the captains of the different messes. A good deal of formality was observed in carrying on the duty, and for the enforcement of cleanliness. With this view the prisoners were regularly mustered on deck and ranged in divisions. They were then carefully inspected by the overseers of the divisions, and if in all respects found correct they reported accordingly to the chief overseer, and he to the sergeant-major,

who finally accompanied me on my inspection. The same system was pursued throughout the voyage; and it appeared to have an excellent effect in preserving an orderly demeanour among the prisoners, besides enabling me at once to detect any incipient disease.

When off the Cape of Good Hope, in a calm, the captain of a French vessel came on board to compare his reckoning, and was quite surprised to find that the passengers were prisoners, and not soldiers as he had supposed. I may appear to be giving rather too favourable a report of these convicts, but their behaviour was certainly surprisingly good; for even on occasions when something occurred to ruffle their temper, one rarely heard them make use of bad language.

As there were several well-educated men amongst them, a weekly journal was established, wherein the little current events were recorded, with an occasional story or poetry. As the editor had an honoured poetic name (Byron), and was a well-educated man, the journal afforded interesting occupation to him, and to others who helped in copying the weekly production.

As it was of the utmost importance to find occupation for the prisoners, our limited means were fully utilized. Such necessary operations as cleaning and cooking gave employment to a good many. Others were engaged, when the weather admitted of

their being on deck, in tailoring and in knitting stockings, and some in reading ; so that in a short time after getting to sea, and when the pangs of sea-sickness had been overcome, the scene on deck might be fairly described as one of order and industry. A taste for reading was encouraged, and some read aloud for the benefit of the others. By strict adherence to the daily routine and regulations, the duties were carried out with great regularity as far as the prisoners were concerned.

The pensioners composing the guard, as might be expected from their being old soldiers, soon accommodated themselves to their new position, and were most steady and attentive in the performance of their duties. I soon found out, however, that it was necessary to be very particular even in their case ; for we had not been more than two or three days at sea when some of the pensioners appeared on deck in plain clothes much the worse for wear, and with many inelegant patches. This I ascertained was with the view of saving their uniforms during the voyage ; but as it was the uniform more than the wearers that tended to keep our dangerous cargo in check, this practice was at once ordered to be discontinued. The muskets, too, were new, and required to be put in working order, and at first some missed fire ; but these faults were soon remedied.

The wives of the guard were for a time difficult to manage, and great consideration was required in

dealing with them. There were twenty-six in all, with fifty-three children, and to make matters worse, as before stated, one of them had managed to get smuggled on board with her child suffering from measles.

The discomforts necessarily attending their position in being crowded together in such a small space must have been very trying to the temper, however much they might have been inclined to accommodate themselves to circumstances. Very few, however, appeared to be so amiably disposed. On the contrary, they seemed ready to find fault for the slightest reason. Great difficulty was at first experienced in keeping the barrack-deck clean and wholesome, through the persistency of the women in remaining below with their children. As disease in its worst form would have been generated had they been allowed to indulge in their idle and untidy habits, it was necessary to insist on having the place cleared out for the purposes of thorough scrubbing and drying and for free ventilation. This tyranny, as they deemed it, was not carried out without a great amount of abuse; but in time the women began to see the necessity, and even admitted the great benefit, of the procedure.

The food, which was of the very best description, also gave rise to occasional complaints; and when the tinned meats were first issued they occasioned a perfect turmoil. This was owing to the ignorance of

the women, who appeared never to have seen them before ; but before the end of the voyage they duly appreciated the luxury. The husbands did not escape blame on some of these occasions ; and one of them actually reported his wife for continued discontent, saying that he could not please her at all.

The prisoners went on deck at different times to wash, and at first some of them appeared very much afraid of standing on the damp deck with bare feet, and wore their shoes. But as water was plentiful alongside, and as cleanliness was of the utmost importance, they soon became accustomed to the free use of it.

After breakfast, the prisoners were carefully mustered and inspected, and the prison-deck, when reported clean, underwent a thorough inspection. A careful search was frequently made on these occasions for prohibited articles.

The religious services were regularly conducted by the religious instructor. He also started a school, and issued books at stated times.

The prisoners were always on deck as much as possible, when the weather permitted, for work, instruction, or exercise. At such times the utmost vigilance was maintained, the guard being always on the poop with arms ready for use ; for although the behaviour of the convicts was remarkably good, the risk of a rising could not be overlooked. The inability of prisoners in their position to place re-

liance on one another was no doubt a great source of safety ; for although I gave no encouragement to the spy system in any form, all suspicious movements were brought to my notice at once. In order to infuse some cheerfulness into their monotonous existence, two of their number who played the violin remarkably well were allowed to indulge their taste, and their efforts were much appreciated.

The children of the guard were not neglected ; and with a view to keep them out of mischief, a school was started, and two well-conducted prisoners were selected as teachers. The parents appeared much pleased and thankful. The school was held on the quarter-deck ; and it was a pleasing sight to see the little ones paying great attention to their instructors. This gratifying experiment met with a sudden check. One day, when the school was in an apparently flourishing state, I was surprised, on going out of my cabin, to find the two school-masters without any pupils. On inquiring the reason, they, after some hesitation, told me that some religious book had been given them which had given offence to the parents. I at once sent for the parents on deck, and expressed my surprise at the absence of the children. As they were not inclined to give any reason for this, I told them what I had heard. They acknowledged that I had been correctly informed, and said that they did not like the religion of their children to be interfered with. I told

them that that had been done without my knowledge, and that it was not likely to occur again. They expressed their thanks for the trouble that had been taken in forming the school; and in a short time all the children made their appearance on deck, and no further trouble occurred.

Considering the varied characters of those on board, it was surprising to see the order and regularity that prevailed. When we got fairly settled down, very little occurred throughout the long and tedious voyage to relieve the monotony; and every little incident, such as the sight of a ship, or the capture of a fish, was eagerly taken advantage of by the editor of the *Chronicle*, who duly recorded it therein. The omission of the usual ceremony at the crossing of the line was a disappointment to the ship's company; but under the circumstances it was not considered safe to allow it.

When everything had been going on for some time in a satisfactory manner, the schools and the working parties, etc., being regularly on deck, and the soldiers' wives sewing, there was one day an alarm of fire; and on rushing out of my cabin I was dismayed to find flames ascending from the galley fire, which had set fire to the fore-sail. Unfortunately, the prisoners were on deck at the time; but as we were going before a very light breeze, the energetic actions of officers and crew soon subdued the flames, and order was

restored. I was particularly pleased with the conduct of the corporal of the guard, who at once had his men drawn up in front of the poop, in readiness to suppress any disorder or attempted rising. With this exception, nothing of a serious nature occurred throughout the long and tedious voyage; and as we were for many weeks favoured with fine weather (only occasionally interrupted by storms), the schooling and other occupations continued to be carried on with little interruption. On reaching the higher southern latitudes, where we frequently encountered very heavy gales, with cold and wet weather, it was impossible to keep the prisoners as much on deck as was desirable; but we did all we could to remedy the evil, and nothing of any great importance occurred.

We succeeded in entering Storm Bay early in the morning of November 14th, and the land was a welcome sight to all on board, as we had not seen it for many weeks, or even caught sight of a sail of any description. There being a strong head-wind, we had to beat up against it, and with the assistance of a few of the prisoners the yards went round with an alacrity which would have done no discredit to a man-of-war. We anchored off Hobart, then Hobart Town, at 4 P.M., the prisoners, crew, guard, and families all in good health, and greatly improved by the voyage. The result was a source of great satisfaction to all concerned. The gen-

eral order and good conduct prevailing throughout the voyage had been very remarkable, considering the many difficulties we had to contend with in dealing with such varied descriptions of people.

After the inspection of the ship and the prisoners by the colonial authorities, the disembarkation began. There was at the time a strong feeling against the reception of convicts into the colony, but there was evidently at the same time a great demand for agricultural labourers ; and as a great many of our convicts had been taken from the rural districts in England, and had been selected (as already stated) for good conduct and robust health, I have every reason to believe that the greater number turned out well. I could not help thinking at the time that the arrival of these men was an advantage to the colony and a loss to the mother country, as they might have been profitably employed on public works at home ; whereas many of those left behind in the various prisons were of the habitual criminal class, who are, as a rule, troublesome and idle characters.

Considering the few years that had elapsed since the first settlement there of a convict colony, it was surprising to see the progress that had been made. Hobart itself was of considerable size, and contained many fine buildings ; and though the convict element bore a large proportion to the free population, the greatest order and regularity prevailed throughout

the town, and the streets on Sundays were as orderly as those of a Scotch town. The roads and the bridges, which are not surpassed in any other country, will prove a lasting memorial of convict labour. Even when we take into consideration the ample resources afforded by the Imperial Government, the development of this colony is truly surprising. Hobart itself, which is beautifully situated at the base of Mount Wellington, towering to a height of more than four thousand feet, and studded with enormous gum-trees, looked as if it had been in existence for many years, and had all the appearance of a well-regulated English town, with nothing to indicate the preponderating convict element.

The whole tone of the place was that of a little England in a thriving condition; and even at that date the aborigines had dwindled away to little more than a dozen. The native animals are likely to share the same fate, as the kangaroo and others of the marsupial species are gradually diminishing, giving place to importations from Europe.

The well-kept gardens and nurseries also gave to the town an English aspect, most of the fruits and vegetables having been imported from home; and the strawberries, which were in season at the time of our arrival, were equal to any that I had seen at Covent Garden. Great improvements, however, and many changes must have taken place since my visit. The people seemed enterprising

and industrious ; and as I heard no complaint of the prisoners I took out, I sincerely hope they maintained in their future career the exemplary behaviour they observed under my charge.

After a residence of three months, waiting for a homeward-bound vessel, I left the colony, favourably impressed with the climate and scenery, and the many advantages offered to industrious and enterprising men.

CHAPTER II.

DARTMOOR CONVICT PRISON.

IN 1852 I obtained an appointment as medical officer to Dartmoor Convict Prison, and with it an opportunity of transferring my experience of prison management, and of the character and conduct of our convict population, from the sea to the land.

Dartmoor had formerly been a place of confinement for prisoners of war on an extensive scale; but having been unoccupied for many years, it had become almost ruinous. Under the able direction of that true philanthropist, the late Sir Joshua Jebb, portions of the old building were made fit for habitation, and adapted to the secure custody of prisoners, who, at the time I took charge, amounted to about twelve hundred, drawn from the different convict prisons.

When I joined it, the prison had been in operation for about two years, and with a success which fully justified the expectations of the originator. Although there were many difficulties to contend

with in such an undertaking, Sir Joshua's great experience and indefatigable exertions, assisted by those of a resident governor and deputy-governor thoroughly acquainted with their duties, made it a complete success. As the deputy-governor possessed the special advantage of a knowledge of agricultural matters, and the convicts were to be mainly employed in cultivating and reclaiming the land, the success of the new colony may be said to have been assured.

The prisoners were for the most part of the invalid class. The healthy men, who formed the minority, were selected for the harder kinds of work. By careful classification a considerable amount of work was realized. The strongest men were employed in quarrying, reclaiming the land, and digging peat for fuel; and the aged and weakly in tailoring, shoemaking, and other sedentary occupations. The reclamation of the waste was attended with great labour, as it entailed the blasting and removal of formidable boulders, as well as trenching and deep digging, so as to reach and cut through the hard crust which formed a formidable obstacle to efficient drainage.

The portion of land already reclaimed formed a striking contrast to the surrounding waste; and as its temperature was higher by about two degrees than that of the unreclaimed land, the extended operations must have produced a considerable im-

provement in the climate of the immediate neighbourhood.

Many of the prisoners were greatly enfeebled by long-standing diseases, while others had had their constitutions undermined by intemperance and other depraved habits, and others again by long-continued solitary confinement. Such men, whatever their maladies, are generally unfavourable subjects for imprisonment; but the storms, damp, and fogs of Dartmoor had no injurious effect on any but rheumatic subjects. On the contrary, the change to this elevated situation proved beneficial in a great many instances, particularly in those of pulmonary consumption in its early stages, and of other affections of the chest. Asthma, in particular, was much alleviated, so that the patients often expressed surprise that they suffered little or no inconvenience from the densest fog, whereas they had scarcely been able to breathe in such weather in London.

As the solitary or separate system was much in vogue, and was carried out to a great extent at this time, I was often struck with the beneficial effects of the change to this place on prisoners received direct from separate prisons. The appearance of those men frequently gave evidence of impairment, both bodily and mental, marked by great depression, a semi-idiotic expression, and dilatation of the pupils. In such cases the direct removal from the separate

prisons to the free, exhilarating atmosphere of Dartmoor gave rise to a reaction, which was sometimes so great as to terminate in urgent head symptoms. It therefore appeared to me very desirable to keep prisoners in association for some time preceding their removal to Dartmoor. But those who were in favour of this separate system for criminals, as tending to their reformation, were at much pains to prove that it was possible to continue the plan for a very long period without affecting the bodily or the mental health. That, however, was not in accordance with my experience ; for although the depressing effects of the system may have rendered those subjected to it more submissive to discipline, the ulterior effects were no doubt in many cases most injurious. This was more especially the case, as it was but reasonable to expect, in those predisposed to consumption ; for though the cells might be preserved in a wholesome condition by the strictest attention, the want of frequent out-door exercise and of conversation, to give play to the respiratory organs, as well as the depression attending on separation, must have interfered with the healthy functions of the body. Entertaining as I did these views, and having taken occasion to express them, I was pleased to see a modification of the system shortly carried out.

Although the greater number of the prisoners received at this station were so much impaired in health from the causes above alluded to, as well as

by various diseases they laboured under (often so advanced as to hold out little prospect of cure), the change produced a marked improvement, even in cases that at first appeared most unpromising. Many, indeed, of the youthful and middle-aged prisoners experienced such a favourable change in health and strength, that they became fit for the usual out-door occupations. For the aged, weakly, rheumatic, and bronchitic men, on the contrary, the situation was unsuited; but they would possibly have suffered quite as much in cold and stormy weather elsewhere.

No doubt there was some beneficial influence in operation to counteract the effects of the drenching rains, tempests, dense fogs, and cheerless aspect of the surrounding desolate moorland; and this was perhaps the rarefied atmosphere saturated with sea-breezes and charged with ozone. The bleaching power of the atmosphere, even when the sun's rays were obscured by the density of the fog, was remarkable.

As the reclaiming operations have been steadily pursued up to the present time, the land under cultivation is considerably extended, and trees are planted and flourishing in situations where there was formerly no vestige of a shrub. The former cheerless waste may in time revive the name of Dartmoor Forest, which for many centuries was justified only by the celebrated stunted oaks.

Although the great amount of labour required in these reclaiming operations cannot be so easily or so fully realized as that elsewhere bestowed on the making of valuable docks and on other vast undertakings carried on by the labour of prisoners, yet the good results aimed at in the double object of employing our criminals and benefiting the country at large have doubtless been largely attained. Railway communication will greatly enhance the value of the labour, by the ready transit of prepared granite for public works, as well as by the mangold and other produce grown on the reclaimed moors.

The isolated position of Dartmoor renders it very suitable for the confinement of prisoners ; for while the strength of the building renders escape difficult, the extent of waste and the scanty shelter afforded by the moor make recapture easy. Still some daring men occasionally make the attempt, taking advantage of the frequent fogs which suddenly envelop the working parties and baffle the vigilance of the best officers. Clever attempts have also been made direct from the prison.

In one case a noted housebreaker managed to cut a hole in the roof of the prison, through which he passed. By lowering himself from one ledge to another he succeeded in reaching the high boundary wall, from which he dropped. Then reaching the quarters of one of the superior officers, he entered it without difficulty, as shutters were not considered

necessary. Having changed his prison dress for a suit of the officer's clothes which had been hung up to dry, he made a comfortable supper. His next step was to carry off a saddle and bridle, hoping to secure the horse; but he was unable to force the stable door. Failing in this, he went on to the inn at Two Bridges, distant about a mile, and appropriated a horse which was grazing in a field. The saddle he left behind, but he fastened the bridle on the horse, and started for Exeter.

He had not, however, proceeded a couple of miles when he met with an unexpected check; for, strange to say, he encountered the inn-keeper himself, driving home with a friend from a fair. Boniface at once recognized his horse, and asked the man where he was going with it at that early hour. Instead of stopping to reply, he pushed on, but was at once pursued. He soon came to grief, for on going down a hill he was unable to keep the spurs of the officer's boots which he had appropriated clear of the horse's sides, and he was thrown and easily captured.

As a last resource he pulled out a handful of silver spoons, and offered them as a bribe; but that was of no avail. He was soon brought back, and when visited by the officer in his cell, coolly told him the coat was a pretty good fit. The officer lost his suit, but was glad to have his silver restored, as the prisoner had left him only a few common articles, which appeared to have been carefully

tested. An addition to his sentence was the result; but I have no doubt he thought his cleverly contrived escape deserving of a better fate.

In concluding what I have to say about Dartmoor, the following extract from my report to the directors in 1853 shows the opinion I formed soon after entering upon my duties there:—

“My short residence here does not enable me to offer any positive opinion as to the locality, but judging from the healthy appearance of the inhabitants, and the comparatively little inconvenience suffered by the most delicate in the establishment, I am inclined to think the situation on the whole pretty well adapted for invalids. The monotonous aspect of the surrounding country, with the prevalence of dense fogs, has no doubt for a time a depressing effect even on those in the most robust health. The fogs certainly surpass in density and duration any that I have experienced in other quarters of the globe; and although I cannot agree with some of the natives in considering them healthy, those suffering from diseases of the respiratory organs seem to be comparatively little affected by them, and the inhabitants are singularly exempt from chest complaints. I have frequently observed that patients suffering from diseases of the chest experience most inconvenience shortly before a change from fine weather, and feel relief when the fogs or rain actually set in.

"The continued general inclemency of the weather, which exceeds in severity any season in the memory of the oldest residents, has been much against the invalids; but notwithstanding that great disadvantage, a marked improvement is observable in the health of the greater number of them. This has been very remarkable of late, as the prisoners recently received here have for the most part been weakly and emaciated. There are many advantages connected with this establishment in a medical point of view, particularly that of being able to find employment suited for the different capabilities of the prisoners, especially those connected with the agricultural operations, which are most beneficial in re-establishing the health both of mind and body. The prison being situated on a gentle slope, with an abundant supply of water, precludes the risk of deleterious accumulation in the sewers; and the ventilation and warming of the building have received the greatest attention, and are in a very perfect state."

Further experience tended to confirm the early favourable impressions I entertained of the place, and in my Annual Report of 1856 I remark: "As a cold and moist climate is generally understood to favour the production of tubercular consumption, I may state that I have found it quite the reverse here, and that the disease is almost unknown among the natives of this elevated and humid locality.

From having had opportunities of witnessing its resistless progress to a fatal termination in more favoured and genial climates, I have no hesitation in expressing my opinion in favour of Dartmoor for this class of invalids."

In taking leave of Dartmoor, I may say that in spite of many drawbacks and the recollections of the storms in winter which I had to encounter in the performance of my duty, not only by day, but frequently during the night, with the roads almost blocked with snow or covered with ice, I am able to look back with much satisfaction to my residence there.

On invalids suffering from pulmonary complaints, or with a predisposition to them, as well as from the effects of various other diseases (not of a rheumatic nature), the change to Dartmoor is likely to have a salutary effect; and if accommodation suited to the wants of visitors could be obtained, the situation would become better known and duly appreciated by the public at large.

CHAPTER III.

WOOLWICH—THE CONVICT HULKS.

MY transference from Dartmoor to the Invalid Hulks at Woolwich, with a view of proceeding to Woking Invalid Establishment, then in the course of construction, enabled me to form an opinion of the disadvantages attending the treatment of prisoners on board ship. The hulk system was, however, no doubt painted in the darkest colours, and it is but fair to those in charge to say that they did their utmost to overcome the many difficulties and obstacles with which they had to contend. I was pleased to find the decks and other parts of the ships *Defence* and *Unity* in a very creditable condition, and the means of supervision (which were no doubt very limited compared with the building on shore) made available to the fullest extent.

The *Defence*, which was an old line-of-battle ship, afforded good accommodation, and was set apart for the prisoners not under medical treatment, and considered fit for some kind of employment.

This was almost limited to oakum-picking, tailoring, and cleaning.

The *Unity*, an old frigate, lofty between decks, was set apart as a hospital ship for prisoners requiring medical treatment, and it answered the purpose remarkably well. Most of the diseases under which the prisoners laboured had formed the ground of invaliding them, for they were generally of long standing, and the patients were greatly debilitated. A considerable number of them were bedridden. There were also many aged men suffering from chronic maladies, holding out little prospect of permanent benefit.

The want of proper means for occupying the time of such prisoners as were able to work was a great disadvantage, and was no doubt injurious to those inclined to exert themselves. But others appeared quite contented to indulge their indolent dispositions, frequently complaining of illness, or trying to exaggerate any trifling ailment, with the view of escaping removal to a labour-prison. One great evil I had to contend with on first joining was the issue of porter as an encouragement to work. This was supposed to be given on the recommendation of the medical officer, and required his written authority. But as the prisoners were not under medical treatment, it appeared to me to be not only unnecessary, but also likely to have a bad effect; and as there was no order in existence

to authorize it, it was gradually discontinued. The weakly men and patients in the hospital were, however, allowed beer as well as wine when these were considered necessary. No doubt the porter had been first ordered in the other cases for some special reason, and had not been discontinued, and so ended in abuse.

In dealing with prisoners, it is specially desirable to avoid any deviation from the established dietary, or from any other rule or custom, as such deviation gives rise to jealousy and discontent, and so proves a source of great danger to those who, in the discharge of their duty, are called upon to rectify the irregularity.

The disadvantages and attendant evils of the hulk system were sufficiently apparent to make its discontinuance desirable; but during my short experience there no disorder occurred. On the contrary, discipline was well maintained; the prisoners were orderly and respectful, and the infrequency of acts of insubordination or violence showed that those in charge did their best to overcome the defects with which they had to contend.

A sudden and unexpected change took place in July 1857, owing to the destruction of the ship *Defence* by fire, and the consequent transference of the convicts to the old prison at Lewes. This was successfully carried out, and the building was

soon prepared for their accommodation as a temporary expedient.

As most of the invalids who were able to do work were removed to other prisons at the time of the disaster, the remainder were for the most part of the confirmed invalid class, suffering from old-standing and incurable diseases, advanced age, and various bodily defects. The old buildings were properly prepared and fitted up for the accommodation of these men, and answered the purpose very well until the new invalid prison was in a fit state for their reception.

The transference of the whole body of invalid convicts, with the staff of officers, to Woking took place on the 22nd March 1860, and as the railway arrangements were remarkably good, the operation was effected without difficulty or accident. Many of the sick men were in a weakly condition, and were accordingly placed in cots slung from the roof of the railway carriages, so that they suffered little inconvenience from the journey.

CHAPTER IV.

WOKING INVALID PRISON.

As this new establishment was devised for the treatment of invalid prisoners, I will here give such an account of it as may enable those who have not seen it to appreciate its fitness for the work for which it was designed.

The building is situated on a rising ground within a convenient distance of Woking Junction. The soil is light and sandy, admitting of the freest percolation ; while the sloping site lends itself to the quick flow of rain, and offers unusual facilities for drainage, which is of the best description, all deleterious matters being quickly carried away. The hospital has a south aspect and a very extensive view. The water-supply, drawn from an artesian well, is abundant and of good quality. The cells, rooms, and corridors throughout the building are large and lofty, and the exercising grounds in dimensions are all that could be desired.

The main building was divided in the centre by

the chapel, with a wing at each end. The basement floor, which was intended for the aged and crippled, was subdivided into rooms varying in size, for the accommodation of from seven to twelve occupants, so as to admit of good classification. The middle floor was set apart for the hospital, and consisted of four large wards, two on each side, with a room between subsequently converted into a bath-room and lavatory, which was fitted up with two baths at one end, and with a range of basins on each side. The patients had access to it from either ward; but as the two wards used it alternately, their occupants had no communication with one another.

The fitting up of a hospital for sick men who are also prisoners is a matter of some difficulty; but here the class of men for whom the prison was intended has not been lost sight of, and their comforts and well-being have met with every attention. The wards themselves are well lighted, warmed, and ventilated, with windows on one side looking to the south, and on the other into the corridor, which contains the heating apparatus. The ventilation as measured by cubic space was satisfactory. It amounted to seven hundred cubic feet per bed.

The rooms in the centre of the building on this floor being used as a dispensary, with offices attached, afforded ready and convenient access to the wards in case of emergency. Having the medical wards, the dispensary, and the offices on the same

floor, is a very convenient arrangement. A short experience sufficed to convince me of its excellence, so that I was able in an early report to express my high approval of the arrangements in every respect.

The basement and the middle floor of both wings were converted into strong brick cells; and the upper floor, as well as the floor of the main building, was fitted with roomy cells of corrugated iron. The outer buildings, such as cook-house, lavatory, store, etc., were all well adapted to the purposes for which they were intended. Indeed the whole construction and arrangements of the buildings, which were designed and carried out by the late Sir Joshua Jebb, are very complete, and form a lasting memorial of his exertions to promote the reformation and alleviate the condition of criminals.

As it is well known that the sanitary condition of country districts improves with cultivation, I anticipated a progressive and considerable improvement in the health of the inmates of this prison when the surrounding land came to be drained, cleared of brush, and brought into cultivation by the able-bodied prisoners. In this expectation I have not been disappointed.

I believe it was Sir Joshua's design to set apart this building for the reception of prisoners suffering from bodily ailments, while a similar structure should be raised at Brookwood for the treatment of those mentally affected. Although this plan was

not carried into effect, the idea seems to have had due weight with the county authorities, who caused a large lunatic asylum to be erected on the site.

The necessity for an establishment exclusively for the confinement and treatment of invalid prisoners had long been obvious to those acquainted with the service, as the indiscriminate mixture of the healthy with the invalids was injurious in every respect. Many of the former were of the habitual criminal class, and were so completely hardened as to hold out little prospect of reformation, their frequent conviction having so inured them to prison life that it had ceased to be looked on as a disgrace. Nothing could be more disgusting than the look of friendly recognition with which these hardened men welcomed the new-comers.

The difficulties attending the treatment of this class of men cannot well be realized by those who have not had experience of them ; and as they are always unwilling to perform useful and profitable work, this leads to comparisons unfavourable to the invalids. The advantages attending the removal of aged, infirm, and diseased men from the able-bodied prisons, where, as a rule, the inmates are less depraved and more industrious, is very great, especially as the value of their labour in the construction of docks and other great public works more than repays the expense attending their imprisonment.

To those in charge of prisoners it is much more satisfactory to have to deal with the healthy and able-bodied, not only on account of these favourable results of their labours, but from their being generally well-conducted and amenable to discipline. Of this I had good evidence on board the convict ship, for out of one hundred embarked from Portland Prison few incurred reports during the voyage to Australia; and I doubt much if the same number of emigrants would have conducted themselves with greater propriety.

The importance of secluding the permanent invalid class cannot well be overrated; for though unable to earn a livelihood by honest labour, they are quite capable of engaging in many criminal acts, or at all events of instructing others. Some of these men are weakened both in body and in mind, as the result of vicious and depraved lives. They commit acts of vagrancy and petty crimes, and get committed to prison, or confined in the workhouse, where their insubordinate conduct and destructive habits can only be partially kept in check, owing to their impaired health, which renders the ordinary punishments inadmissible. In some instances there may be good evidence of impaired intellect; still the culprits display such cunning in their criminal acts that they avoid the risk of long sentences, and are over and over again set at liberty only to resume their vicious careers.

As the members of this class, especially when advanced in life, are incapable of amendment, I have always thought it desirable, for the sake of the public at large, to have them secluded, that they might be prevented from pursuing their evil careers. As they must be discharged on the completion of their sentences, it is to be regretted that, being unfit to earn an honest living, or being without friends who would be responsible for them, some refuge is not provided where they might be maintained at a cost to the country trifling compared with the loss now inflicted on the community by allowing them to be at large to forage for themselves. This idea was suggested in one of my annual reports many years ago, and I was glad to see about the same time that such a course was approved of by one of the most experienced chaplains in the service, who said :—

“ I cannot help remarking that there is a class of prisoners (unhappily on the increase in this establishment, through their state of health) who are justly styled ‘incorrigibles,’ and of whom there is scarcely a spark of hope remaining that they will do otherwise than return, on their discharge, to a criminal career. In many cases their sentences are long; but however long, they must come to an end. The men will calculate to a nicety the full time they have to serve, will carefully study the utmost restriction and punishments to which they can be

subjected for prison offences, and will often set at defiance all rules and remonstrances. These men will leave the prison at the expiration of their time not, as the public often fancy, with hypocritical pretences of reformation, but with a candid and bare-faced admission that they shall return to their former mode of life, laughing indeed at the idea of honesty; and these men I have sometimes known return to prison with a lighter sentence passed upon them than the former."

The indifference shown by some of the habitual or frequently convicted prisoners, on their return to prison, is a sad spectacle enough, as is the fact that our prisons are less dreaded by the older criminals than our workhouses, and the condition of pauperism looked upon as more discreditable than that of crime. Of this preference of prison to workhouse I can give a striking illustration from the life. An infirm old man had just completed his last sentence. He was without friends, and had no means of support. When about to be discharged he was very abusive. On my inquiring into the cause, he apologized to me for his intemperate language, adding, "But you must allow it is enough to make a man angry when he finds he is to be sent to a union after spending thirty years of his life in a convict prison."

I resume the chaplain's remarks:—

"The question that forces itself on our minds

respecting this class of prisoners is, whether this mode of dealing with them can be right. I feel persuaded that it is not, and I strongly hold with a view that has been proposed more than once, involving of course a change in criminal law, that the sentence passed upon this class of men repeatedly convicted should be one of character, not of crime. If the public could see the conduct of some of these prisoners inside the walls of a prison, and knew that the period for their being let loose on society was close at hand, they would cease to consider, as perhaps the majority do, that imprisonment for life is a very cruel proceeding. All objection to such a system would vanish if such sentence was known—penal servitude for criminal life—the continuance of punishment depending only on the continued manifestation of incorrigibleness.”

These remarks are by a chaplain in every respect well fitted to give a just and correct opinion, and will be fully borne out by those who have had dealings with the class referred to. Good and charitable people are not blameless in this matter, as their indiscriminate alms-giving to the professed beggars who lurk about towns in winter, and betake themselves to the country in summer, no doubt encourages them to pursue their idle and vagrant courses. From being so precarious in its results, their manner of life leads them to practise petty thefts, in order to save themselves from starvation,

and ultimately to engage in crimes of a more serious nature. As these "tramps" are not always disabled from honest labour by infirmity or by advanced age, their erratic lives must be the result of inherent idleness or disinclination for steady occupation, and ought therefore to be strongly discountenanced, in order to avert the evils which they undoubtedly inflict on society.

I believe that some of these men pursue their vagrant career in a systematic manner, and when reduced by privation and exposure, they resort to the workhouse, or qualify for prison, as a resting-place to recruit their wasted strength. These may be considered extreme and exceptional cases, but for all that they must do an infinity of harm by their efforts to support a precarious existence, and in perpetuating the vagrant class.

The class of which we are speaking displays a marked indifference to imprisonment and discipline; but this indifference is perhaps rather assumed than real, for the desire for liberty is strongly evinced by most prisoners, and especially by the sick and the dying. This longing desire for liberty on the part of the poor, helpless, emaciated inmates of an invalid establishment, nearly all of whom have been previously under treatment for long periods, while some are completely bedridden from the time of reception, is very painful to witness. Even in these extreme cases, requiring, as

they do, constant attention and careful nursing, the comforts of the hospital seem to have little influence in counteracting the desire for liberty. In the case of prisoners restored to their friends at the expiration of their sentences, the officer who accompanies the sick man often finds the home so wretched that he has not been surprised to hear that death shortly followed the change. In one case the man had for a long period been completely bedridden and quite helpless, yet he insisted on being taken home, in opposition to my advice and warning. I told him that he would most likely die on the journey; but his great desire was to see his family once more. Finding him resolute, and his sentence having expired, I required him to sign a statement to the effect that he left after being warned of his danger. This was fortunate, as he expired on the railway platform, and his death was no doubt hastened by excitement, as his malady had for some time been stationary. At the coroner's inquest the jury expressed themselves quite satisfied, stating that the deceased had met with every attention at Woking, and that as the document he had signed showed that he had insisted on leaving after being duly warned of his danger, the authorities had no power to detain him, and could not do more than they had done to insure his safety.

Of the many anxious and responsible duties devolving on the medical officer, that of certifying to

the bodily or the mental condition of prisoners requires the most careful and serious consideration, as it not only affects prisoners undergoing their sentences, but occasionally those condemned to death. This duty necessitates a full and careful inquiry into the present condition, past history, and various other circumstances connected with each case, and no one intrusted with it can fail to be deeply impressed with the importance of his decision. We have often to decide on maladies aggravated, or assumed, to such a degree as to baffle detection. The self-inflicted torture to which the malingerer sometimes resorts to carry out his imposture is truly astonishing. Of the many instances which have come under my observation I will specify a few.

When the case was one of actual disease, the disease itself would naturally tend to make the patient peevish and irritable. For this state great allowance was consequently made; but at the same time disorderly conduct, on the part even of the weakest, required to be kept in check.

I quote the following from my first report from Woking in the year 1860:—

I regret to say that my experience of invalid prisoners for the last eight years is not such as to justify me in recommending the relaxation of discipline, where discipline can be safely carried out; in fact, quite the reverse. For I have usually found

invalids more unmanageable than the able-bodied. Some of them, having been long under treatment in other prisons, appear to think that on coming to an invalid establishment they are to be allowed medical extras in abundance, to be exempt from labour of any kind, and, in short, to conduct themselves in a way most agreeable to their tastes, unrestrained by any kind of discipline. In these expectations they must be undeceived, for although they meet with every kindness and comfort consistent with their situation and requirements, misconduct and acts of insubordination cannot be overlooked.

It therefore appears to me very desirable that some means should be devised for showing the invalid prisoners that if their illness does not prevent them from misconducting themselves, neither will it exempt them from paying the penalty awarded to their offence. At the same time, in an establishment like this, where so many are labouring under fatal diseases, too much care cannot be taken to avoid punishments likely to affect health. For lengthened periods, the special diet at present in use is very appropriate ; but it would certainly be desirable if a substitute could be found for bread and water, such as porridge or gruel, rice or oatmeal, the object of rice being to counteract the tendency to diarrhoea so often induced by bread and water alone.

We have lately had some painful examples bear-

ing on this point. Weakly but ill-disposed prisoners, presuming on the state of their health, have been guilty of most disorderly conduct, threatening with violence all who had anything to do with them; and yet in several of the worst cases I was unable to certify them as fit for any kind of punishment, so that simple separation, and that for the safety of others, was the only means available.

As a good deal of the management of prisoners in invalid establishments must naturally devolve on the medical officer, a mild but firm course of procedure appeared best adapted to their treatment. This was more especially required in dealing with the sick in hospital, which consisted of one hundred and sixty beds; and it was my invariable practice, in prescribing for the patients, to treat them with as much consideration as if they had been delicate ladies—at the same time strictly enjoining a kindly treatment on the part of the attendants. By this means the greatest order was generally maintained, and the patients, as a rule, were most respectful in their conduct and demeanour. There were occasional acts of misconduct, and I might sometimes, though rarely, receive an impudent answer. For example:—One man who had an eruption was ordered vegetables; and when I impressed upon him the necessity of eating his potatoes, he replied in an angry tone that he never could eat potatoes in his life. As he was an Irishman, I said, “That is

strange, as your countrymen are supposed to be fond of potatoes." He at once retorted in an insolent manner, "Yes, and in some parts they are fond of oatmeal." I quietly agreed with him, and told him that "I too liked porridge and milk." This made him ashamed of himself, and he at once added, "I beg your honour's pardon." The poor fellow had evidently been put out by something before my visit.

There is one estimable trait in the character of prisoners, observable even among the roughest criminals—I mean the great attention and kindness they bestow on the sick. On many occasions I have witnessed their exertions to alleviate the sufferings of those labouring under loathsome diseases, undeterred by the sickness and vomiting which the duty often produces. No doubt the intercourse with the sick and the dying has a humanizing influence on most people; and as the most hardened criminals are not exempt from this feeling, it has always led me to believe that even the worst criminals are not altogether destitute of some good point which only requires development.

I remarked in the report already referred to, "that the subordinate officers attached to the hospital were then well acquainted with their duties, and were most careful and humane in their management of the patients." After a much longer experience I am able to give the same account of the warders,

who for the most part have been in the position of non-commissioned officers, and well accustomed to enforce discipline. As the public are sometimes inclined to sympathize with criminals, and to consider that those in charge treat them with want of proper humanity, I think it right that they should be disabused of any such notion, for it is most unjust. Need I add that when any officer is found guilty of harsh treatment of a prisoner, he is sure to meet with deserved punishment? Such cases are in my experience of very rare occurrence; but, on the other hand, I have often seen the officers injured by vicious, bad-tempered prisoners, after they had shown the greatest forbearance. This testimony in their favour I consider to be due to a most deserving class of men, whose duties are laborious, trying, and irksome, whose hours of service are long, and who, if found asleep or neglectful of duty, are always severely punished.

My report of January 1860 will give some idea of the judgment and forethought of the able and amiable designer of this large establishment set apart for the medical treatment and reformation of criminals. A further experience of more than twenty-one years enables me to confirm the opinion I ventured to offer as to the position, construction, and sanitary arrangements of Woking Prison. In these respects it will certainly not suffer by comparison with any other building of a similar descrip-

tion. As a proof of the healthfulness of the situation, it will suffice to state that there has been an entire exemption from epidemics; and, with the exception of one case of typhoid fever, occurring in a prisoner who had been employed in cleaning a drain, all the complaints were of a catarrhal nature.

The great variety and the advanced stages of the diseases the invalid convicts laboured under at the time of reception, and for which most of them had been a long time under treatment in the other convict prisons, were sufficient to test the salubrity of Woking to the full extent. Many of the phthisical and other patients were so reduced at the time of reception as to require to be carried or assisted at once to the hospital wards, where they sometimes remained bedridden until death. Others, again, with well-marked indications of the malady in its advanced stage, frequently improved in health, the destructive process that had been set up in the lungs being arrested for a time. In the less advanced stages of phthisis the rapid improvement in weight and strength was often surprising. As chest complaints are by far the most common, and occasion the greatest mortality, the death-rate must always be high; but as the cases are all imported, the deaths, in calculating the mortality, ought to be spread over the prisons from which the convicts are invalided.

Strumous diseases in their worst form, such as

lumbar abscess or affections of the large joints, are frequently under treatment, and the patients sometimes linger on for long periods in a helpless condition. Such cases are often very painful to witness, owing to the constant craving for liberty of those who are destitute of friends able or willing to receive them. But no doubt, instead of imprisonment endangering life in such cases, it tends to prolong it, for the sick prisoner has many advantages not enjoyed even by persons in a good position in life. He is allowed a comfortable bed, a liberal dietary, and medical extras suitable for his case. He is also carefully watched day and night by a hospital officer, assisted when necessary by prisoner-nurses under the officer's immediate supervision. In cases where they have been restored to friends professing themselves able to provide for their wants, the officers who have been sent in charge have often given a very painful account of the miserable abode to which they have been transferred. Liberty, however, is sweet, and these poor creatures are ready to sacrifice all the comforts provided for them in order to obtain it. Let us hope that those prisoners who survive their release for a time may be the better for the enforced habits of cleanliness, order, and regularity which a prolonged confinement in a convict prison implies.

As the work of the able-bodied prisoners was completed they were removed to make room for in-

valids, and the hospital beds were increased to one hundred and sixty-two by the addition of other wards. The bedridden cases were generally rather numerous, owing to the advanced stages of the various maladies and the reduced condition of the patients. Operations were occasionally required, and when I had occasion to amputate for disease of the large joints leading to complete destruction, the issue was as satisfactory as in the case of the minor operations, which were of more frequent occurrence. This good result was undoubtedly due in great measure to the fine pure atmosphere and the well-ventilated wards.

As the building and its various arrangements were so well adapted for the treatment of the sick, it might have been more beneficial to have set it apart exclusively for the treatment of diseases, bodily and mental, with a few able-bodied prisoners to carry on the work. This would have allowed of earlier removal from the labour prisons, when a change was likely to prove serviceable, while the curable cases would have been sooner in a fit state to resume work. Many of the weak and aged men, although not in hospital, were constantly in want of medical aid, and as the work they were put to do was almost nominal, the place was suitable for them; but by careful classification and periodical changes of the more hopeful cases, its advantages might have been more fully utilized.

Notwithstanding every drawback, however, the system pursued was a great boon to the suffering prisoners, as well as highly advantageous to the service.

The duty of attending on the treatment of so many diseased prisoners, labouring under maladies often of an incurable and sometimes of a loathsome description, was necessarily anxious and harassing. Some of the patients were difficult to manage from indulgence in evil habits, and from the diseases under which they laboured rendering them very irritable and peevish. In these cases we had often the satisfaction of seeing our remedies afford relief, and had as our reward respectful behaviour, as well as frequent expressions of gratitude.

CHAPTER V.

MALINGERING.

IN an establishment like that of Woking, where we had at all times serious and fatal diseases under treatment, it was painful to have also to contend with impostors of the most determined description. In some cases the diseases were wholly feigned, in others real ailment was exaggerated ; but in all, the prisoners carried out their deceptions with a cunning and a persistency which rendered them very difficult of detection. The means of supervision at our disposal were greater than in ordinary prisons ; and as these men are given to overact their part on coming to a new place, we were perhaps in a better position to expose their scheming propensities than those who had formerly had charge of them.

Among the diseases most frequently feigned are paralysis, epilepsy, and insanity, spitting of blood, and vomiting of food. A few examples of these will suffice to show the determination evinced in carrying out the impositions.

Paralysis.—J. W. on reception was carried from the van to the hospital, seemingly perfectly helpless, and it was reported that he had been in that condition for two years and ten months. When examined he showed a great dislike to being touched, whining and crying, and at the same time using filthy and threatening language. He was in good bodily condition considering the long time he had been confined to his bed, and this, taken with other symptoms, such as increased sensation about the lower extremities (for which he had been allowed a large cradle to keep off the weight of the bed-clothes), excited my suspicion.

As the cradle appeared unnecessary, and might enable him to move his legs without being observed, I ordered it to be removed. Upon this the night officer reported that he used his legs in turning in bed.

Though various remedies had been administered without effect, but galvanism had not been used, this was tried in the usual way, and, as the muscles acted freely, was continued daily in spite of his insolent and violent behaviour. On the sixth day I found him standing by his bedside, but he still refused to walk. A pair of crutches were then provided for him, and in three days he was walking in the corridor. Next day, on going into the ward with the assistant medical officer to apply the battery, he was gone; and the warder informed me that he

had walked down to the exercise yard with the other patients. He was shortly after sent to a labour prison, and we heard nothing of him for many months, when he had the effrontery to allude to his old malady in a petition which was sent to me for my report.

W. J. was, like J. W., carried from the van to the hospital, apparently helpless. Various remedies were tried without effect, and as there was no wasting of the muscles or other symptoms to account for the loss of power, galvanism was after a time resorted to, and continued regularly, although he offered great resistance. Five days after the first application he too was standing by his bedside; and as he met with every encouragement to persevere in taking exercise, we soon had the satisfaction of seeing him walking about the yard with a stick. I have notes of other cases of this nature, which show with what pertinacity these men carry out their deception. In none of these were harsh or severe measures resorted to, even in cases of the gravest suspicion. The ordinary treatment for the genuine malady was adopted, combined with close and careful supervision. It is but right to add that as a general rule galvanism was not brought into play till after other remedies had failed. Patients suffering from the real disease gladly submit to this or any other remedy likely to benefit them; but malingerers show a great repugnance to it.

Lameness.—J. C. was received for strumous disease of the ankle joints, with extensive swelling of both legs. His conduct was insubordinate, his language was disgusting, and his habits were most filthy. When discharged from hospital for assaulting some of the other patients, he was much improved in health, and was walking about with crutches. He soon, however, refused to walk, and began to crawl on his hands and knees. By this device he succeeded in getting placed in a cell on the ground floor,—which was probably his object; for not long after he succeeded in effecting his escape by sawing through the iron bars of the cell window, and got over the high boundary wall by means of a rope formed of his bed-clothes. He was recaptured at his home, more than a hundred miles from the prison; and, according to his own account, he had walked all the way, subsisting principally on turnips.

Epilepsy.—This complaint was formerly much more frequently feigned than of late years, and I have seen it so common that it might be almost taken for an epidemic. It is sometimes very difficult of detection. The most remarkable case that has come under my notice was sent to the invalid hulk at Woolwich by the late Dr. B——, shortly before I joined. I found that the attacks occurred every third night, and were of the most violent description; and the patient, who was much disfigured

about the head and face, from an accident he was said to have met with before conviction, generally cut and bruised himself severely. Much sympathy was shown him, and every precaution was taken to prevent him from injuring himself, by lining the floor and wall of the cell with mattresses. This continued for several months, when something in his behaviour excited suspicion. The officer reported that on going into the ward to see the effect of some medicine which had been ordered him, he saw him go to the closet after taking it and excite vomiting. The paroxysm came on as usual, and we had at once recourse to the cold *douche*, which made him jump to his feet. The paroxysm also came on as usual three nights after, when the same treatment was employed, and with good effect. I then told him he had been deceiving us all along, and that if he did not desist he would be severely punished. He took my advice, had no return of the fits, and being in good bodily health, was shortly after discharged to a labour prison. Before leaving, he begged me not to report him.

Vomiting of Food.—This is a form of malingering which was of frequent occurrence some years ago, and some cases have come under my observation more recently. The deception is sometimes carried on to such an extent as to endanger life.

One man was so emaciated and exhausted from this cause at the time of his reception as to be

perfectly helpless. After a few days, two detectives were sent from town to obtain information from him, when he required to be carried on his bed to a side-room. He then took an opportunity of telling me he thought he would get well at Woking; and the vomiting soon ceased under our treatment, which consisted of giving small quantities of fluid nourishment at short intervals, and confining him to his back. He was soon able to take the regular diet, and made a rapid recovery from his extreme emaciation, and was in due time sent to a labour prison, having increased in weight more than two stones.

Many other examples might be given of the feigning of these and various other maladies, and the consequent trouble, anxiety, and responsibility devolving on the medical officer, which cannot be well realized by those who have not experienced them. Such cases occur in the military and naval services, with the view of obtaining a discharge; but in the case of convicts the object sought to be gained being more important, the imposition is carried out with almost incredible determination. This remark applies not only to diseases endangering life, but also to mutilations of a serious description, to wounds, injury to the eyes and to other important organs.

Of the wounds, some have been of a dangerous nature, owing to their contiguity to large vessels.

This is especially true of punctured wounds, or stabs leading to the formation of sinuses. One man, invalided for disease of the leg, had a sinus extending to a great depth between the bones; and on probing it one day I discovered something loose, which on extraction was found to be a large darning-needle bound round with thread.

To defeat these desperate men is a duty which the medical officer owes the service; and however careful and conscientious he may be in performing it, he will be fortunate if he escape the ungenerous charge of being too strict on the one hand or easily deceived on the other. There is, fortunately, very seldom any occasion to have recourse to unusual remedies, as those in use for the real diseases, and welcomed by the real sufferer, generally prove repugnant to the schemer, and when combined with strict supervision usually succeed in unmasking the imposture.

Those who are able to appreciate fully the difficulties encountered in the rightful discharge of such duties will be ready to acknowledge them, and to invest them with the importance they deserve. The public are only too ready to give credence to stories of harshness on the part of prison officials, which on investigation are generally proved to be unfounded or greatly exaggerated.* My long ex-

* This was fully verified by the painstaking Commissions presided over by the Earls of Devon and Kimberley.

perience leads me to the conviction that the public sympathy ought to be transferred to the poor hard-worked warders, who receive many a hard knock, and have to endure the disgusting language and practices of the vicious and violent men in their charge.

The prisoners have ample opportunities of making complaints, by written statements to the director, or by word of mouth, and for some time past to independent visiting magistrates, who ask the prisoners if they have any complaints to make. When this question is addressed in the hospital to prisoners whose diseases are apt to render them peevish and irritable, it is not unlikely to lead to unfounded statements of grievances.

Though such questionings would no doubt prove a severe test to patients in a state of freedom, there was rarely a complaining response in our wards, with their one hundred and sixty inmates, and never any complaint of inhumanity or unkindness.

These gentlemen take great interest in their work, and, as their magisterial duties and the experiences they have had of prison discipline enable them to form a correct opinion, their visits have a beneficial effect.

CHAPTER VI.

LUNATIC AND IMBECILE CONVICTS.

THE foregoing remarks on some of the bodily ailments to which the criminal classes are more peculiarly liable, are sufficient to show that the medical officers of prisons who discharge their duties faithfully have no sinecure. This is more especially the case in an invalid prison, where they have to contend with aggravated, chronic, and intractable diseases from hereditary predisposition, or from constitutional degeneracy, the result of intemperate and vicious habits. These remarks apply with even more force to mental affections, which occur among invalid prisoners in every form and degree, from simple weakness of intellect to well-marked lunacy. Mental deficiency is by no means uncommon among habitual criminals, and prevails in many different forms. Some display a marked degree of dulness or stupor; others sharpness and cunning more allied to the tricks of monkeys than the acts of reasonable men.

The physiognomy, as well as the conformation of the skull, is often remarkable; and the result of many *post-mortem* examinations has proved that the brains of prisoners weigh less than the average, and that a large brain is an exception. These cases of mental deficiency or disorder are at times a source of great anxiety to the medical authorities, and this is increased by the inadequate means provided in the prison for the management of such cases.

If a thorough system of classification of prisoners suffering from bodily disease or infirmity is requisite, it is still more so when applied to cases of mental disorder. I have therefore always been strongly in favour of a complete separation of the mentally affected, in however slight a degree, as a means both of upholding discipline and of exercising such supervision as would enable one to form a correct estimate of the mental defect.

I observed in my annual report of 1852, "that many of the prisoners received from other prisons have appeared to be labouring under a stupor of the intellectual faculties, which is commonly marked by hesitation in replying to questions, apathy or indifference to anything passing around them, dilatation of the pupils, and a sickly appearance. As I usually found that these prisoners had undergone separate confinement, I am of opinion that such symptoms are very likely to

arise from prolonged seclusion. Our means for accommodating these patients are imperfect at the present time; but the additions which are now in progress for the use of the sick will soon be available, and will be of great service in the treatment of these and other diseases requiring great care and circumspection."

Again, in 1855, I stated in my remarks on mental affections that "from there being upwards of eighty prisoners in this weak or doubtful state of mind, such cases are frequently brought to my notice. Few of them, however, appear on the sick-list. We have commonly about half a dozen of them in the infirmary suffering from other diseases, particularly catarrh, diarrhoea, and epilepsy, the complaints to which this class of invalids appear most liable." When suffering from bodily disease, these men are generally most troublesome, and subject to fits of excitement which render the greatest vigilance necessary. I give the particulars of two cases recommended for removal.

. 1. R. D., received from Portland in 1864 for imbecility of mind. He proved violent and intractable, and maintained this character to the last. He was several times in the hospital for slight bodily ailments, as well as for observation, so that I had frequent opportunities of watching him. The result confirmed the opinion I have just expressed. He was guilty of repeated acts of violence and of assaults

on officers—the last being an attempt to knock an officer down with a spade. I deemed it necessary to recommend his removal to a lunatic asylum.

2. J. J., received from Northampton Jail in August 1855, as “of weak mind and unfit for separate confinement.” His whole conduct was so eccentric and violent as to leave no doubt in my mind as to his insanity. His manner was very peculiar, and he was guilty of many serious and dangerous acts—such as burning his Bible, Prayer-book, and other books, in his cell, stating as his reason that he could not derive any benefit from them; breaking articles of furniture and the window of his cell without the slightest provocation, and frequently threatening the lives of officers. It was considered unsafe to allow him to associate with other prisoners, and an inquiry into the state of his mind resulted in an order for his removal to Bethlehem.

A great many of the weak-minded prisoners are, however, harmless and even industrious, and the management of them reflects great credit on the officers. But, as I have before observed, there appears to me to be a necessity for a more complete separation between the weak-minded and the healthy prisoners, as their eccentricities give rise on the part of the healthy to remarks which irritate and excite them. This separation would also bring them more prominently under the notice of the officers in charge of the working parties.

These remarks may serve to show that this class of men has always been a source of anxiety. They have become much more so of late years, owing to their increase in number, so that they now form a large proportion of the inmates of an invalid prison ; for, in addition to the large number removed from other prisons on account of weak mind, many are invalided for bodily diseases whose intellects are more or less impaired. Some again have been found to have been inmates of lunatic asylums at some former time.

Having always been impressed with the risk attending the association of these men (many of whom could not justly be held responsible for their acts) with sane prisoners, a special treatment has always appeared to me to be very desirable, as they are often incited to mischief by fellow-prisoners, and so become frequent inmates of the refractory cells. Seeing the disadvantages attending the indiscriminate association of the weak-minded with the sane, I was strongly in favour of complete separation of these men, both inside and when at work, not only as a means of counteracting the disadvantages attending their association with the sane, but also with a view of checking malingering, which can only be done by close observation of the impostors.

The difficulties and dangers attending the management of the weak-minded prisoners when they are treated in the same way as ordinary prisoners and

are associated with them, I have frequently alluded to in my letters and reports, and have recommended complete separation. This became more necessary about the year 1863, as the number of this class had increased to about one hundred, and many of the cases were such as to cause great anxiety. The histories of these men previously to invaliding, as gleaned from the reports forwarded to me, showed that they had been troublesome and insubordinate, and that the usual discipline had proved unavailing. The term "weak-minded" does not give an exact idea of the class of which I am treating; for although some were merely eccentric and generally quiet and tractable, others evinced well-marked indications of insanity—such as general insubordination, destructive and filthy habits, and sometimes serious attempts at suicide. One man under observation for epilepsy inflicted a deep vertical wound in the abdomen with a piece of sharpened iron, and, while bleeding freely from his wound, was discovered trying to hang himself from the bar of his cell window. On being detected, he said, as he was unable to kill himself by opening his belly, he would do it by hanging.

To frustrate attempts at suicide, the utmost vigilance is at all times necessary, for even those made by malingerers without any serious intention may sometimes prove fatal.

In some instances these men assume an ostentatious, overbearing manner, often threatening with

violence any one daring to oppose them. One of this class, an artist, of foreign extraction, was supposed to be feigning religious mania, and was under close observation. On one occasion, on returning from exercise, he was told by the officer to go into his cell; and he replied, "Do you know who I am? I am the Lord Jesus Christ." The officer, an Irishman, promptly replied, "And I am St. Peter, for I have the keys; so in wid you." The man offered no resistance, but did as he was told. In dealing with such cases, special officers are essential, for they require great command of temper, a firm but conciliatory manner, and an interest in their peculiar duty. Those detailed for duty by the prison authorities for the most part acquitted themselves well, but the frequent changes this plan entailed were objectionable.

Having always been in favour of the complete separation of the weak-minded and imbecile prisoners from the rest, I was glad to have an opportunity of giving the plan a trial. This was carried out by placing the Protestant prisoners in one ward and the Roman Catholics in another, under the charge of special officers, with three well-conducted prisoners in each ward to assist in cleaning it. This was continued for some time, and seemed to answer well; but the old system of association was again resorted to, much to my regret.

In reporting on one of these men (Reg. 4602.

J. P., in July 1872) I alluded to the necessity for the complete separation of this class from the great body of prisoners, as much discretion is required on the part of the officers in dealing with them. I also pointed out that these men had all been invalidated for mental maladies, and were therefore considered unfit for labour prisons.

The question of the responsibility of members of the imbecile class for acts of violence is one of great importance, and difficult of solution, and each case would require to be taken on its own merits. To be able to arrive at a correct opinion respecting the mental state of a prisoner, his present condition should be carefully inquired into, as well as his antecedents. This duty naturally entails much trouble and anxiety on the medical officer intrusted with the responsibility of drawing up a report on the case. On the one hand, by an error in judgment, the malingerer might escape the punishment he has justly incurred; whilst on the other a semi-idiotic, impulsive creature might be punished for a crime for which he was not accountable. Medical men are often severely criticised for differing in opinion on such cases. But they are not more open to such censure than others, even than the highest legal authorities; and when the life of a fellow-creature rests on their decision, the necessity for caution must be obvious. With all our care and circumspection an inaccurate judgment may be arrived at,

as the *post-mortem* examination sometimes reveals a large amount of brain disease in troublesome prisoners of which there was no indication during life. Softening is the most common form ; and in one instance that came under my notice, the greater portion of the organ was reduced to the consistence of thick cream.

Professor Guy, who has had large experience of criminals, and may be considered the first authority on this intricate subject, says, in his work entitled "Factors of the Unsound Mind," that "weak-minded prisoners are apt to be attracted by royalty and its surroundings to assaults on crowned heads." As he alludes among others to Lieutenant Pate, who struck the Queen, I am able to confirm his view, as I had the man under my close observation for some months on board the convict ship. Such an unprovoked assault on a woman in the lowest walk of life would excite feelings of indignation ; but in the case of a young and beloved queen this natural feeling was greatly intensified. A poor, worthless, ill-disposed outcast might possibly be incited to commit an outrageous act with the view of gaining some object ; but in the case of an officer of a distinguished regiment, possessed of ample means, and with no ostensible object to gain, such an act could only be the result of some mad, uncontrollable impulse. This impression must have existed in the minds of those responsible for the

lenient sentence passed upon this man, which from personal observation appeared to me perfectly justifiable. I found him reserved and peculiarly gentle and refined in his manners, so as to seem totally incapable of such a crime when in his right mind.

Another offender against royalty was the boy Jones, who was found secreted in Buckingham Palace, and who was also under my observation for some time during a cruise in the Mediterranean. He was peculiar in appearance and of a morose disposition, and seemed to have a hankering after the precincts of royalty, for on being allowed a run on shore, he soon made his way to the palace at Athens, and was found in the garden.

Although many of these cases are more deserving of pity than of blame, the utmost caution is required to discriminate between the really weak-minded and those cunning miscreants who feign mental peculiarities as a cloak for their misdeeds. These men belong to the worst description of criminals, and are proper subjects for the most deterring punishments.

It is no doubt difficult to arrive at a right decision in many of these cases, and the duty devolving on medical men is far more onerous, disagreeable, and dangerous than is generally supposed.

These men not only injure themselves in carrying out their deceptions, but they do not scruple to attack also those in charge of them, and they some-

times resort to practices so disgusting as to appear incredible to the inexperienced. A gentleman in charge during my temporary absence told me that it would be necessary to send one man to an asylum at once, and mentioned some of his abominable practices. On visiting him in company with my friend, I said, "You appear to have been trying to deceive this gentleman," when the man at once made light of it, and my friend turned away utterly surprised. The cleverness and determination with which these impostures are carried out sometimes baffle the most experienced, but generally the close observation of them by those accustomed to such cases ultimately leads to detection.

CHAPTER VII.

THE LUNATIC WING AT WOKING.

THE Criminal Lunatic Asylum at Broadmoor being set apart for prisoners found to be insane at the time of trial, the number of those that had become insane, or were found to be insane, whilst undergoing their sentences in convict prisons increased. Hence a larger provision for the security and treatment of this class became necessary. It was accordingly decided to appropriate the west wing of Woking Invalid Prison to these cases, and with this view to isolate it from the rest of the building, so as to prevent any communication between the sane and the insane prisoners, both inside and when at work or exercise outside. I was therefore requested to report on the alteration necessary to make it suitable for the purpose.

As we were without many of the needful appliances of an ordinary asylum, which could only be expected in a building specially constructed for the reception and treatment of lunatics, my recommen-

dation referred principally to safety and increased supervision. As the wing consisted of three floors, the stanchion railing was recommended to be raised, and the cells, which were of brick on the lower and middle floors and of corrugated iron on the upper, to be cleared of any projections which might admit of the men hanging themselves. The window gratings and ventilating holes in the iron, which were within reach of the occupant, were also recommended to be protected. Baths and lavatories supplied with hot and cold water were also to be constructed on each landing; and means of occupation and amusement were provided. The iron bedsteads were recommended to be replaced by stout wooden ones. A staff of ten officers, consisting of a principal warder and one acting principal warder, two warders, and six assistant warders, was also recommended for day and night duty.

This was the staff recommended for sixty lunatic prisoners, the number first intended. The lunatics were to be under the care and management of the medical officers, as if they had been hospital patients; but the medical officers were dependent on the prison authorities for things required for use.

The lunatics began to arrive in 1875, and we soon discovered that the precautionary measures recommended for safety were not in excess of our requirements. Many of those first received were of the insubordinate type, and from their histories some

of them appeared to have been pursuing a life-long career of crime and deception, spending most of their time in prisons, asylums, and workhouses. Even in the more favourable or hopeful cases, it must be remembered that we had to deal with lunatics that were also criminals, and it was sometimes difficult to discriminate between these two elements of character. Whatever the impression made by the conduct and bearing of these men as to the genuineness of their insanity, the fact of their being invalided as lunatics, although not certified in the usual way, made it imperative on us to treat them as lunatics until we had good proof to the contrary. They were therefore at once placed in the lunatic division, and put on hospital diet; and some were in impaired bodily health. A kindly forbearing treatment on the part of the officers was also enjoined, and the men were encouraged to do a little work; but most of them showed a disinclination to exert themselves in any way, and it was difficult even to make them walk about in the exercise yard.

The number of these men went on steadily increasing, with a large admixture of the insubordinate class. Some of them by their violence, their threats, and their general bad conduct, evidently tried to intimidate the officers; so that considerable firmness was required on the part of all in charge.

These prisoners afforded a striking contrast to ordinary lunatics by their tendency to combined

acts of violence, and by the secrecy and cunning displayed in their assaults on officers. Their transference to Woking instead of to an asylum was evidently a great disappointment to some of them, and gave rise to a good deal of self-inflicted torture in attempts at suicide or in efforts at deception. One man opened the vein of his arm with a piece of glass, and said that if he had known where he was coming to he would have jumped out of the railway carriage. He had been in several asylums, and was considered very dangerous. He gradually settled down, however, and became orderly and industrious as a cleaner ; but while employed along with others in colouring a cell, he stabbed one of his companions severely in the loins with a piece of pointed steel. As the kidney was wounded, the man was for some time in a critical state, but ultimately he recovered. No reason could be assigned for the act ; but as both men had formerly been inmates of Broadmoor, it was supposed to be the revival of some old quarrel.

Similar assaults by the lunatics on one another were not infrequent at first ; and they were planned and carried out with a cunning that for a time defied the efforts and the vigilance of the officers to keep them in check. The utmost care was taken to discover objectionable and dangerous articles by searching the prisoners on returning from exercise, and at other times when they did not expect it.

Search was also made in the cells, and many dangerous articles were found, such as pieces of sharpened steel. These, and nails and fragments of iron, sharpened to a fine point, fixed to a piece of wood, and bound round with a rag, to give a firm hold, were secreted in various ways, in some instances in the seams of the floor.

Although these men occasionally quarrelled and assaulted one another, their homicidal propensities were more frequently directed against the officers and myself, when their wishes were not gratified.

The lunatics steadily increased, and necessitated a considerable enlargement of the division, which already included one entire wing and the upper floor of the whole building. The highest daily number realized during the five years I had charge, was one hundred and ninety-six. For greater security, and for the safety of the officers, great circumspection was exercised. The most daring and desperate were placed in the brick cells, which are large and well ventilated, with ready access to a good exercise yard; no difference being made in their treatment. But we laboured under a great disadvantage in not being able to allow them asylum indulgences, such as many of them formerly had enjoyed, especially the much-coveted tobacco. Such means, however, as were available for the encouragement of good behaviour were fully taken advantage of.

Careful classification and other precautionary measures were soon discovered to be absolutely necessary, as these men began to assume a turbulent bearing, and to maintain the character for insubordination which they had fully earned previously to reception. They lost no opportunity of assailing the officers and myself with threats of violence, and with language of the most disgusting description; and when their passion got the better of them, they tore their clothes and bedding to shreds, smashed their iron bedsteads, and with the legs broke everything within reach. Others resorted to the revolting practice of defiling their bodies and the walls of their cells with excrement; and in three instances large holes were made in the walls of the cells by detaching the bricks.

In a large experience of the criminal class nothing ever came under my notice to equal the depravity of these men; and ordinary people can have no conception of the amount of villany concentrated in so small a space. As any one of these dangerous men would have been sufficient to alarm a whole neighbourhood, their seclusion was a great benefit to the community. Their histories, as a rule, showed that they had long led a life of vice and crime, so that there was little hope of their permanent amendment.

The precautionary measures adopted for the safety of the great body of lunatics, and of the

officers attached to the division, from the violence of these outrageous men, became more necessary as they increased in number. During the five years that I was in charge they amounted at one time, as I have stated, to one hundred and ninety-six, and of that number about fifty were of this daring and dangerous class, delighting in deeds of mischief and violence, and when an opportunity occurred, trying to incite the more quietly disposed to follow their bad example. Some of these men were strong and robust, and included a few ex-prize-fighters, so that extra care and prudence were required in dealing with them. It was, indeed, a painful duty to visit the incorrigible ward, and to be assailed with language most revolting and threatening. But happily, in the midst of all their violence, they displayed a great want of courage, and rarely attempted an open attack on those in charge. Three of the most serious assaults were of a treacherous description. One warder was struck in the temple with a stone when on guard, and afterwards suffered so severely from head symptoms that he required to be superannuated. The first principal warder was severely stabbed in the neck and back as he turned to unlock the door leading to the yard, and was unable to resume duty. His successor was also stabbed severely in the back of the neck and head, and one ear was divided, by a man who suddenly rushed on him when he was engaged in his room.

I reached the spot immediately, and found the officer fainting from loss of blood ; and although his escape, considering how near the wounds were to the large vessels of the neck, was almost miraculous, he made a good recovery, and being a cool, courageous man, resumed duty. Assaults of a similar but less serious nature occasionally occurred, which it was impossible to impute to carelessness. They were wholly due to the secrecy and cunning of the lunatics, which the constant searching for prohibited articles, and other obvious measures of precaution, failed to frustrate.

Some of the acts of these men were of a most daring and determined description. Three desperate characters concocted a plan of escape from their cells by making holes in the walls by cleverly detaching the brick-work. One of them even succeeded in making a hole large enough to admit of his passing into the hall. Another planned an escape from his cell during the night, and released a companion. The two armed themselves with pieces of their iron bedsteads ; but they were fortunately detected at the gate leading to the exercise yard by the watchman. Had they succeeded in getting outside, the result would probably have been serious.

Most of these dangerous men were of the habitual criminal class, and the crimes that had led to their conviction were of a serious nature. One of them had been convicted forty times for assault, and ended

by throwing his wife out of a window. But it is singular that they should evince so great a desire to carry out their homicidal propensities, or otherwise to injure others, while they show a marked degree of cowardice and a tendency to presume on their position as lunatics. Such men, when guilty of assault, would sometimes say, "You can't touch me; I am a lunatic." One of the worst and most treacherous was discovered with a small stiletto made out of a piece of the steel spring of his truss. This weapon was supposed to be intended for me; yet he would ask me for indulgences in the most bland and obsequious manner. The conduct of some of these dangerous men appeared inconsistent with genuine lunacy, and to be more allied to wickedness of the worst description. It rendered them more fitted for the strict discipline of a prison than for the indulgent treatment of an asylum. But having been invalided as lunatics, they were treated accordingly, until we had good indications to the contrary.

Most of the insubordination and violence occurred in the earlier part of the formation of the lunatic division. By persistence in a kindly, encouraging, but at the same time firm line of procedure, the men gradually settled down. Some who were found by a special inquiry to be sane and accountable for their actions were removed to labour prisons. Though only a few were sent back, the procedure

appeared to act as a check to others; and when I gave up my charge they were comparatively quiet and orderly.

It is a relief to turn from these violent and dangerous men, which I do with a feeling of thankfulness that, in spite of the many difficulties we had to contend with, we escaped with our lives, though there were, as we have seen, some very narrow escapes on the part of the officers. The great body of the lunatics exhibited a marked difference in many respects from these incorrigible men. They were less inclined to associate with one another. When at exercise they wandered about singly, and they rarely showed any disposition to combine in acts of mischief or of violence. But they were subject to occasional fits of excitement, for which there was no obvious cause. On these occasions they would smash everything within reach, and destroy their clothing and bedding. One powerful man, an ex-pugilist, when employed in sweeping his cell, rushed out brush in hand, and broke the gas-light pane in about a dozen cells before he could be stopped, and then quietly returned. They often indeed destroyed articles they highly prized and might have been weeks in making, seemingly from a sudden outburst of passion which they were unable to control.

It appeared to me of the utmost importance to occupy their minds in various ways; and as they

could not be compelled to do any kind of work, they were encouraged as much as possible. One of my principal recommendations was their employment at out-door work on the farm; but this could not be put into operation for a time, as it was considered necessary to send them out in charge of officers with muskets, as if they had been ordinary prisoners—a course which appeared to me objectionable. They were ultimately sent out in charge of officers with only staves for their protection, and with these as little exposed as possible. The number of those allowed to work with spades was limited, for the safety of the officers and of themselves.

A wash-house was also built in the yard, which gave employment to a dozen or fifteen men, who did all the washing for the division. As the inmates numbered at one time one hundred and ninety-six, and for a considerable period averaged one hundred and fifty, the washing required entailed a great amount of work, increased by the dirty habits of some of the lunatics, among whom were a few whose clothes required to be changed several times a day.

These washers sometimes struck work for some petty reason; but they occasioned little inconvenience, as we generally found others ready to fill the vacancies, and most of those who had struck soon asked to be allowed to resume their places.

Another useful piece of work performed by the lunatics was the asphaltting of the walks in the exercise yard with a mixture of tar and other refuse from the gas-house. This had been tried on a small scale many years before, but had not been carried out; and as a piece remained which showed its durability, it appeared to me a good opportunity to give the plan another trial, and I had the satisfaction of seeing the walks in the large exercise yards, and the parade ground, finished in a way likely to prove durable.

The extensive wooden flooring required a good deal of labour to keep it in a creditable condition, and this was accomplished in a satisfactory manner by exciting and encouraging a little emulation. In carrying out this and like works of encouragement, we laboured under the great disadvantage of being precluded from giving tobacco, beer, and other indulgences allowed in asylums. Only the usual dietary was available; but to those working in the manner stated a little cocoa and bread was allowed, and proved a great boon. As an additional means of encouraging good conduct, paper, pencils, and paints were served out to those able to make use of them, and they were much prized by those having a taste for writing or painting. Some of these men displayed considerable taste, though their delineations were for the most part of a very fantastic description. But the occupation evidently

interested them, and they were always much pleased when complimented on their work. Others occupied their time in making various articles out of bones from the cook-house, such as tooth-picks, paper-folders, and other articles. They displayed great taste and ingenuity, considering the primitive nature of their tools, which consisted mainly of pieces of flint, glass, rough stones for polishing, and old "magnum-bonum" pens. Many were musically inclined, and a few managed to make violins; and some contrived banjos out of American cheese-boxes with astonishing ingenuity and neatness. As they were provided with strings, and hair for the violin bows, they soon learned to play a few tunes, and the tone of their instruments was sometimes remarkably good. Others again managed to make flutes and pipes out of old gutta-percha pots and clay; and the sound was by no means disagreeable. As the making of these instruments and the learning to play upon them were a source of much interest, it met with encouragement. The small pebbles picked up in the yard were polished, and set in bone or gutta-percha so as to form neat ornaments. One man, who called himself Melchizedek the high priest, made himself an elaborate helmet, studded all over with these polished stones, which he styled the crown of glory. In this head-dress he marched at the head of the lunatics to chapel, carrying in his hand a pastoral staff, also highly ornamented.

Another was engaged for many months inventing an extraordinary machine to be propelled through the air in any direction at great speed. Many other freaks and fancies had to be indulged, in order to keep the men quiet, as some of them were most passionate; and, as I have already said, it was not an uncommon occurrence for them to destroy articles that had taken a long time to make. Such men were sometimes so intent on their work that it was difficult to get them to leave it in order to take necessary exercise. In addition to various sources of amusement, employment was found for some in two work-rooms, chiefly in mending clothes; but it was of a desultory nature, as compulsion was undesirable and useless, on account not only of their mental condition, but also in many instances of impaired bodily health. Those who had a taste for reading were provided with books, the illustrated magazines being most in request on account of the pictures, from which those who had a taste for drawing made enlarged copies, generally of a rough description. The religious services were regularly conducted in the work-rooms in the morning. Protestants and Roman Catholics were allowed to attend their respective chapels, and a small place in each was set apart for their use, admitting of close inspection and of freedom from annoyance from the other prisoners.

By carrying out these measures with close and

careful supervision, combined with firmness, a gradual improvement took place in the conduct and bearing of these men. The acts of insubordination and violence so common in the division at first,—destruction of clothing; threats, with disgusting language and fearful imprecations; assaults on officers and fellow-prisoners,—gradually moderated, and at length gave place to comparative order and quietness.

As my charge of these men extended over five years, I had great reason to be satisfied with the result; for it will be allowed by those experienced in the management of the insane that the criminal element coexisting with the lunatic adds considerably to the trouble and danger attending their treatment. The separation of these men from sane and healthy prisoners must be of great advantage in upholding proper discipline, as their eccentricities and irregularities are likely to have an injurious effect in many ways. Even the most sceptical as to the genuineness of their insanity cannot fail to entertain some doubt as to their responsibility; and as this must lead to hesitation in awarding punishment for offences, it is not unlikely to give rise to malingering.

The plan of setting apart a division of a prison for the treatment of these lunatic criminals has no doubt proved satisfactory to a certain extent; but it would be infinitely better to have them in a sepa-

rate building, properly certified. The position of a medical officer intrusted with the charge of such men, located in a portion of a prison, is discouraging; for whilst his duties are arduous, responsible, and dangerous, he is dependent on a local authority for the means of carrying on a work which from its nature requires great freedom of action. Having experienced these difficulties, and being now clear of the service, I have less hesitation in saying that an invalid prison ought to be in charge of a medical governor, more especially when it is partly a lunatic asylum, for an officer who is not a medical man cannot be a good judge of its requirements. The possession of an honourable medical degree ought not to debar a man from advancement in any service, least of all in this. Considering the many thousand convicts transported in former years to Australia in charge of naval surgeons, there ought to be no doubt or misgiving as to the competency of members of the medical profession to undertake this charge. The number of lunatic asylums under medical superintendents, and so admirably conducted as to prove a credit to our country, may be adduced as an additional argument in favour of the course now recommended.

As some of the lunatics were suffering from bodily diseases, a large airy ward was set apart for their treatment, where they were constantly—by night as well as by day—under the supervision of

an officer, with assistant nurses under his immediate direction. This duty was often of a trying description, as there were generally a few patients in the ward as helpless as infants, and very hard to keep clean; but in these cases too the officers displayed a care and gentleness very greatly to their credit. The hospital dietary was varied according to circumstances. Extra articles were allowed as they were required, and it was gratifying to witness a smile of thankfulness on the faces of men unable to express their gratitude in words.

Out of the three hundred and fifteen cases treated in the lunatic division during the five years for which I had charge of it, the great majority evinced well-marked indications of mental derangement. Some of those received soon after the opening of the division were of a doubtful character, and took the most active part in the violent, outrageous, and disgusting acts which were for a time of rather frequent occurrence. They also occasionally punished themselves severely by self-inflicted torture in the feigned attempts at suicide of which I have spoken. A few whose insanity had clearly been proved to be feigned were sent to labour prisons, but having resumed their former practices, were soon returned to us.

It is not surprising that lunatic criminals prove unwelcome patients in ordinary asylums, as even a few of them are capable of endangering the har-

mony and order prevailing in those establishments. As Broadmoor is nearly allied to an ordinary asylum, owing to the "criminal lunatics" found insane at the time of trial being sent there, these are naturally entitled to the usual treatment of lunatics. Those we had to deal with were men who had exhibited symptoms of insanity whilst undergoing their sentences, and who were in contradistinction termed "lunatic criminals." They are of a different description, and being prone to combine in acts of insubordination and violence, greater security for those in charge and greater firmness in the management were essential. At the same time, when well conducted and amenable to a kind system of treatment, they ought to meet with the indulgence extended to ordinary lunatics.

With the exception of the few doubtful cases which have just been alluded to, the greater number of these men presented unmistakable indications of mental derangement; and though in some instances there was for a time fair ground of suspicion as to the genuineness of their lunacy, further experience served to dispel any doubt. The *post-mortem* examinations in most of these cases revealed extensive disease of the brain, the most common appearances being softening or serous effusion. This organ was generally small, rarely exceeding three pounds in weight, and in one case only one pound eleven and a quarter ounces. The most common forms of

unsoundness were delusions (eighty-one); excitable dementia, with exalted ideas, violent and dangerous (twenty-eight); epileptic, imbecile, and dirty (forty-seven); melancholic and religious mania (ten); incoherent (twelve); paralysis (five); suicidal (six). The rest showed well-marked features of insanity, though not easily classified.

Their former occupations were very various, but labourers formed the largest section, and numbered one hundred and seven. The others included forty-nine different descriptions, embracing many occupations requiring both education and intellect; and this may account for the ingenuity displayed by some of these men in making various articles with primitive tools and rough materials. Some of these industrious men were never happy without some occupation; and for those who were dangerous and excitable, it was of special importance to encourage their taste by finding them some employment of an agreeable nature. Many others were so listless and apathetic that it was very difficult to engage their attention in any way, but various efforts were made to afford them some amusement.

On the whole, I feel justified in stating that the result of the experiment has been satisfactory, the casualties not being of a serious nature, considering the large number of men we had to deal with. The general improvement that took place in the behaviour of the great body of the men, coupled with

the recoveries justifying removals to other prisons, afforded further grounds of satisfaction.

Since writing the foregoing, the Report of the Commission on Criminal Lunacy has been issued, and in it it is stated: "We feel that the inmates of the lunatic wards at Woking—in respect of whom it appears to us the statutory provisions contained in 27 and 28 Vict., cap. 29, sec. 2 and 3, should be enforced—should be distinctly recognized as criminal lunatics by the appointment of the wing containing these wards as an asylum under the Broadmoor Act, thus bringing these convicts under the safeguards and provisions intended by the Legislature to be applied to the whole class. It is evident that such an arrangement would save the transference of convicts to Broadmoor, which is now necessary when the expiration of the sentence is at hand. Moreover, the wards at Woking afford greater security for safe custody than the wards at Broadmoor, and are especially fitted for convicts whose lunacy is sometimes assumed, and who are often dangerous."

These views being quite in accordance with my own, after five years' experience in charge of the lunatic division at Woking, I have taken the liberty of making the quotation.

CHAPTER VIII.

THE TREATMENT OF PRISONERS.

THE great subject of the proper treatment of prisoners has lately engaged much public attention. Advances have consequently been made in this direction, and although many changes advocated by men deeply interested have proved impracticable, a steady improvement has been going on.

Of late years too the prevention of crime has deservedly engaged much attention, and many excellent people, unsparing of their time and money, have succeeded in pointing out some necessary reforms. Reformatories and refuges again, both ashore and afloat, are an honour to our country and to those who take a warm interest in their management. By their means many neglected or ill-disposed lads have been saved from the blighting and contaminating influence of a prison, to become useful members of society. Where, unfortunately, the criminal propensity is so strongly rooted as to resist the efforts made in these institutions, and they

come at length to be sentenced to penal servitude, they prove, as a rule, the most insubordinate inmates of our convict prisons. These troublesome creatures are often the children of debased and drunken parents, generally of the habitual criminal class ; so that the inherent hereditary predisposition, as well as the bad example set them at home, renders removal from such baneful influences the surest safeguard. The change from wretched dwellings, with the accompaniment in most cases of ragged clothes and scanty food, to a place where they are clothed, fed, and educated, must act most favourably on youthful minds. These good effects are sufficiently evident on visiting a refuge such as Bisley in Surrey, and others of the same kind in different parts of the country and on board ships set apart for their reception, where the utmost cleanliness, order, and industry prevail. The tidy, cheerful, and healthy appearance of the inmates of these establishments is also very striking ; and their surroundings cannot but prove effectual in weaning them from any desire to return to their former miserable position.

The well-directed efforts of the Earl of Shaftesbury and others in this direction are deserving of all praise and encouragement, for they have no doubt been the means of saving many a poor neglected lad from a life of crime and misery.

Vagrancy is a fruitful means of adding to the

criminal class, and the men addicted to it generally prove hardened and troublesome prisoners. It is rather singular, too, that although, from the nature of their erratic lives, vagrants must have been inured to many privations, they are more prone to find fault with their food than those accustomed to the comforts of life.

As the professional vagrant is closely allied to the habitual criminal, it is to be regretted that so many are allowed to roam about the country in a state of idleness, living on alms extorted by fear or mistaken sympathy. The poor suffering from misfortunes of various kinds are entitled to all our sympathies; and it is pleasing to see the exertions made to ameliorate their condition, and the magnificent institutions erected for their comfort and support, — substantial proofs that their misfortunes and sufferings are not overlooked by the generous and wealthy.

The exhibitions of misery in various forms to be met with in our streets and thoroughfares might seem to imply want of feeling for the poor and neglect of them; but these people, it is well known, find begging more profitable and agreeable than to be inmates of an asylum. Those, again, who are well able to work seem to have a sort of morbid dislike to any settled employment. Some of them have been accustomed to a roaming life from infancy, and they are consequently more ready to

endure the misery and privation attending this degraded calling.

As vagrancy, like crime, is often hereditary, and the two frequently co-exist, the suppression of vagrancy deserves great attention, not only in consideration of the evils to which it gives rise, but still more as being inexcusable in a country which makes such liberal provision for the poor and needy.

About the time of my entering the service the cessation of transportation to the colonies, and the substitution of penal servitude at home, gave rise to various changes with a view to the profitable employment of prisoners. That this has been accomplished by Sir Joshua Jebb and his able successors is amply proved by the extensive reclamation of the waste lands of Dartmoor, and the magnificent works of Portland, Portsmouth, and Chatham,—lasting monuments of the value of convict labour properly directed and utilized. The opposition to transportation made by the colonists was perhaps natural; but at the same time it was unreasonable, especially in such colonies as Tasmania, which was from the first a penal settlement, and which owes to convict labour the magnificent roads and bridges that have so largely contributed to its prosperity.

On the other hand, the abolition of transportation gave rise to an outcry on the part of those

who imagined that without this safety-valve the country must in time be overrun with criminals. This feeling has gradually disappeared; and even those who know the trouble bestowed on the selection of prisoners for embarkation, and are alive to the evil of sending away healthy and able-bodied men, while the aged, infirm, and crippled are left to accumulate at home, have gradually become reconciled to the change.

The ticket-of-leave system was another source of anxiety; and for a long period all our worst crimes were attributed to it, undoubtedly in many instances with great injustice. One gentleman told me that he had been robbed by one of our ticket-of-leave men; but when I asked him how he knew that he was a ticket-of-leave man, he was obliged to confess that he only supposed so. Thereupon I gave him, by way of illustration, a case of a very different description:—

I was paying a visit to some large chemical works in the north, and the gentleman who was escorting me left me for a few minutes, when a sooty figure came running up to me out of one of the work-rooms, and said, "Ah, sir, I am glad to see you looking sae weel." As I did not recognize him, he quickly added, "I am —, and was in your charge at —; but dinna tell them I was there." Seeing my friend returning, the poor fellow quickly vanished into the smoky room he had

left. As this man was evidently leading a steady, industrious life, a knowledge of his imprisonment might have prejudiced his employer and fellow-workers against him, so of course his secret was not divulged.

Those who condemned the ticket-of-leave system were probably not aware that liberation on ticket-of-leave was the result of good conduct and industry, and that infraction of prison rules and idleness entailed the full period of imprisonment, at the close of which the prisoners were released without any check on their future behaviour. The supervision of the police and periodical reporting must have exercised a wholesome influence where there was any latent desire to revert to evil courses.

Those who were returned to prison on revoked license sometimes complained of being haunted by the police to such an extent as to frustrate their efforts to obtain an honest living; but though there may have been cases of over-vigilance and want of discretion, the haunting of which they complained was more likely to have arisen from misconduct, or from association under suspicious circumstances with former evil companions. In the case of prisoners who had been in respectable positions, and who from their antecedents were not likely again to commit themselves, the trial must naturally have been greater than to the hardened criminal; hence some difference became necessary, and proper deli-

cacy was no doubt observed in dealing with this class. Again, the efforts made by the Prisoners' Aid Society to start liberated prisoners in a course of honest industry are deserving of great praise. The society has been instrumental in saving many men from reverting to their former criminal courses.

The separate system of discipline which had been much in vogue, and like many other plans had been carried to an extreme length in some countries, and to a great extent in this, was at the same time undergoing some modification. This had become necessary owing to the injurious effect on the bodily and mental condition, as indicated by the haggard appearance, dilated pupils, and idiotic expression of those coming under my observation. The advocates of the solitary or separate system were able to adduce examples of its long continuance without resulting injury to mind or body; but these were probably exceptional cases. When the separate system was first tried in Pentonville Prison, the subjects of the experiment were selected with the greatest care as regarded age, physical and mental condition, and other circumstances supposed to be favourable. The men were in the prime of life, free from hereditary or acquired tendency to disease, and physically fit for the work of colonization; and the result appears to have been satisfactory. The system was afterwards extended to all adult convicts who were free from contagious

and other specific diseases, and this change was followed by an increase in the mental and bodily ailments; and the medical officer, in his report for 1851, states that "a sufficient general cause for an increased amount of sickness and insanity might be found in the altered conditions connected with the admission of prisoners." A further elimination was made on moral grounds, the prisoners selected being, for the most part, those who had been guilty of the less heinous transportable offences, first convictions, and others in which a reasonable hope of reformation was entertained. Instead of this strictly-selected body, Pentonville Prison now receives all adult male convicts who are free from contagious and such other specific disease as should render them unfit for confinement in separation.

It will thus be obvious that the careful selection of a few out of the great body of prisoners to test their power of enduring seclusion from their fellows must have been somewhat fallacious, as was proved when the great body of them came to be submitted to the same ordeal. No doubt different prisoners, like other men, are differently constituted; and they differ also considerably in the nature of their former avocations, those accustomed to a sedentary occupation entailing confinement within doors not being so likely to be injuriously affected as others accustomed to move about.

Long-continued seclusion must in most cases

tend to impair the bodily and mental condition even of men occupying well-ventilated cells, fed on wholesome and sufficient food, and made to take exercise at stated hours. The salutary effect apparently induced by this mode of discipline was perhaps merely the removal of the apathetic, submissive, and listless demeanour which the seclusion had brought about.

The unfavourable result of the experience at Pentonville Prison led to the period of separate confinement being reduced, and the system being modified. This was in 1851, about which time I was requested to give my views on the subject, and state the impression conveyed to my mind by the appearance of men from close prisons, without being aware of the opinions entertained by others more immediately concerned. The separate system, when properly carried out, as I believe it is at present, is an admirable arrangement; for it not only gives the prisoners time to reflect on their past misdeeds, but also inculcates habits of order and cleanliness. At the same time, the religious and other instruction afforded them, as well as the means of learning some useful trade, cannot fail to have some beneficial effect even on the most hardened criminals. These reformatory measures have at the same time the great advantage of counteracting any bad results likely to attend on separate confinement. As the probationary period affords the greatest facilities for giving instruction

to the uneducated, it ought to be fully carried out, for nothing can contribute more to the reformation of prisoners. We are often gratified by seeing a prisoner, who could not read or write before, exhibit with pride a letter neatly written and tolerably well expressed. Some prisoners, too, show a great aptitude for learning, and acquire a taste for reading which is likely to be cultivated on release.

It was formerly the custom to send all prisoners to school at stated times, including even some who were more highly educated than their teachers. On one occasion a stranger visiting the school expressed surprise at seeing one of the pupils with what he thought was a German book. But the man meekly replied, "It is Hebrew." This man was a clergyman, and highly accomplished in various branches of learning; but as he had been twice convicted, it would seem that he was unable to resist a propensity to defraud. As he was quiet and inoffensive in prison, a refuge of some kind might have been more suitable for an elderly man of his position and sacred calling. Although it would perhaps be unjust to make a difference between prisoners who had been in a good position and those of low degree, still it is painful to see such men associating by necessity with the worst description of prisoners.

This matter has not escaped the notice of the Board of Directors, who, like their predecessors, have always taken great interest in all measures tending

to improve the condition of prisoners ; and the steps recently taken to separate men under first convictions from the rest will contribute to this end. But it should be borne in mind that there is a wide difference between a man suffering penal servitude for his first criminal act and another who may have been pursuing a life-long career of crime, but in such a methodical way as to escape it. Such difficulties must be met as they arise ; and as it is of infinite importance to avoid all contaminating influences, no trouble ought to be spared by those in charge to carry out this enlightened view.

The educated and better class of prisoners, accustomed to the comforts and luxuries of life, generally adapt themselves more readily to their painful position than others less favourably circumstanced. They rarely give trouble to the authorities, and are always ready to perform the work required of them. I have also seen them taking an interest in their ignorant fellow-prisoners, and by good example and the information acquired by education and better social position they are able to do much good. This was more particularly the case in the hospital, where such men, when acting as nurses, displayed great devotion to their work, never shrinking from the performance of any duty, however disagreeable. They would also read to the bedridden patients, and aloud in the centre of the ward for the benefit of all the inmates, who seemed to appreciate

it. I ventured to suggest the reading aloud to the infirm and cripples in the work-room, as it was likely to interest them and prove some check to improper conversation. In justice to the other prisoners, I ought to add that this kindly feeling to the sick is not peculiar to the better class, for I have found it to be universal in prisons. The sight of the suffering entailed by disease appears to exert a humanizing influence, and even the rougher element will often show a devoted attention and tenderness quite remarkable, and such as to call forth the grateful acknowledgments of the medical officer. Such recognition of service is always appreciated by the men.

This sympathy of the healthy with the sick prisoners is sometimes shown in a very touching manner when prisoners are conscious that their end approaches. It seems as if in the very worst criminals there may be some latent good which only requires to be developed. In saying this I recall to mind the case of a dying man in hospital who obstinately refused the kind ministrations of the chaplain; but shortly before he died he expressed a wish to see a companion then in the prison. This man was extremely rough in manner, and apparently completely hardened; but when brought to the bedside of his dying friend he was quite overcome, and on being told that he refused to see the chaplain, he implored him to change his mind and not to die

like a dog, the tears all the time rolling down his cheeks.

The introduction of the mark system as an encouragement to good conduct and industry, and a check on misconduct and idleness, has proved very successful. The inducement held out by this system is very great, as the term of imprisonment is lessened by the gain of full marks, whereas those who incur reports for acts of misconduct have to undergo the full term of their sentence. This plan therefore holds out great encouragement to industry, and has no doubt materially lessened the necessity for punishment—a matter of vast importance in an invalid prison, where a large proportion of the inmates are habitual criminals of the worst description, and owing to the serious and often fatal nature of their maladies, they are rendered unfit for any dietary or other punishment of a depressing nature. When these men are tempted, as they often are, to give free vent to their vicious tempers, and are made to understand that their delinquencies will entail stoppage of marks and consequently lengthened confinement, they experience a check. They show this by the efforts they often make to get forfeited marks restored when their period of confinement is drawing to a close. This, as I have already stated, is sometimes painfully apparent in the appeal made to the visiting director even by prisoners hopelessly ill in hospital, who are ready to forego the many

comforts allowed them, for the sake of returning to their friends, and in many instances to a miserable abode. A careful record is kept of each prisoner's marks, and duly noted on his card, so that they are kept well informed of their true position. As these cards are in the prisoners' possession, and are taken by the prison authorities at stated periods to be made up, they are when returned closely scrutinized by the prisoners, and any error would be sure of detection. With so little to engage their attention in the quietude of their cells, the card is likely to be frequently pondered over, and any loss of marks arising from their own fault cannot fail to make them reflect on the loss sustained by some offence which might have been easily avoided, and which they will be unwilling to repeat.

This system of marks is even more valuable in an invalid than in an able-bodied prison, where the inmates are more able to undergo punishment, while in invalid prisons they are apt, presuming on their weakly condition, to give way to vicious temper. The hopelessly diseased cannot fail to be strongly impressed by the stoppage of marks, as they have so little prospect of making up the deficiency by subsequent industry and good behaviour.

On first joining the service I was much impressed by the just and humanizing system in force by the Board of Directors for the treatment of prisoners; and the same has been fully carried out by their

successors, with various measures contributing to their improvement and reformation. This encouraging plan of management has therefore always occupied a prominent part in the treatment of prisoners, and has led to the use of great discretion in the exercise of coercive or preventive measures. Prisoners, in spite of their personal failings, have a keen sense of justice and honesty, and are ready to complain of any infringement of their just rights. Complaints of insufficiency in the quality or quantity of their food are not unusual with the lowest class of prisoners, who, as already stated, are, as a rule, more exacting and difficult to please than those formerly accustomed to the comforts of life. But as they can have their food weighed, and can appeal to the medical officer, this form of discontent is effectually checked. Their complaints of unfitness for the work assigned them are at once referred to the medical officer for his opinion, and reports of illness meet with immediate attention. They have also the power of making complaints to the director at his usual visits, and to the visiting magistrates, who are unconnected with the service. But during my long experience I have rarely seen them made; and when made, they were for the most part of a trivial nature. Individual treatment by the superior authorities ought to be carried out as much as possible, with a view of gaining a correct knowledge of the characters and antecedents of the prisoners, and

to avoid being too much influenced by the inferior officers. This appears to be very essential in maintaining proper discipline in a prison; for the inmates are close observers of what is passing around them, and when they have reason to suspect undue influence, it not only tends to make them look upon the inferior officers with suspicion, but lessens respect for superior authority.

The duties connected with a prison are of a nature to require the constant attention and supervision of those intrusted with the charge, but with proper relaxation from duties which are both anxious and depressing.

My experience of the criminal class leads me to the belief that good discipline can be maintained in an effectual and satisfactory manner without frequent recourse to punishment. The general good conduct prevailing on board the convict ship in my charge during the voyage to Australia may not be a fair criterion, as the men were carefully selected; but subsequent observation of the able-bodied class of prisoners tends to confirm the opinion I have just expressed. Although many of these men, from their former reckless life and habits of depredation, might be supposed to be hardened and indifferent, they have a keen sense of what is right and wrong, and on that account may be more amenable to order and regularity.

It is very different with the habitual criminal or

those allied to the semi-imbecile class, on whom encouragement and punishment seem alike ineffectual in restraining their bad dispositions. Dietary punishments have been most commonly resorted to, and in the case of weak-minded prisoners with, I fear, little permanent benefit. They fail as a deterrent measure. The infliction of bread and water when frequently repeated has always appeared to me objectionable; for many of those subjected to it became impaired in body and mind, and where there was any hereditary tendency to disease, such as phthisis or scrofula, the depressing effect of the punishment tended to develop it. These men, again, from the frequent repetition of bread and water, become so inured to want of food that when shut up in a cell, either light or darkened, the pangs of hunger are little felt. The facility attending the infliction of this form of punishment has rendered it so common as to be looked upon as the only penance for refractory people. The punishment is therefore awarded without hesitation by those who would perhaps be shocked by the infliction of a moderate birching. Yet the effect of the dietary punishment is far more serious to health than the bodily pain, for it sometimes lays the foundation for maladies of a fatal nature.

A great responsibility rests upon the medical officer as regards punishment. In the more serious cases tried by a director he has to examine the

prisoners and certify their fitness or unfitness for corporal or dietary punishment. This is a necessary precautionary measure, and one which has no doubt contributed to the freedom of convict prisons from unpleasant casualties. The governor is restricted to dietary punishments; and although the same precaution is not taken in this case, it would be a step in the right direction: for as long as the medical officer is held responsible for any injury to health, he ought undoubtedly to be consulted as to the fitness of a prisoner for punishment, for when it is awarded he naturally feels reluctant to interfere. He was formerly not made aware that a prisoner was under punishment until he made his regular visits to the refractory cells; but all such cases have been for some time notified to him. I trust that the bread and water system may soon be altogether abolished, or, at all events, guarded by some addition to help to counteract its baneful effects. If these delinquents were sent out with the working parties it might be advantageous; for although not expected to work on insufficient nourishment, it would tend to preserve health, and at the same time be more distasteful to men who would prefer to sleep away their time in a close atmosphere. In invalid prisons it might be advisable to restrict dietary punishments to the penal class diet, which is of a kind to insure the individual from any injurious effects.

Considering the description of men to be found in convict prisons, corporal punishment is rarely inflicted. It is always confined to cases of aggravated and persistent misconduct, and assaults on officers or on their fellow-prisoners. Although, therefore, this punishment is not often necessary, its discontinuance would be attended with considerable risk, as some vicious, bad-tempered men are only to be restrained by the dread of corporal punishment. Such men, as a rule, are cunning and cowardly in their mode of assault, generally manifesting indifference about any injury they may have occasioned, whilst they at the same time show very little courage when their offence leads to the infliction of bodily pain. In most prisons the delinquents form but a small proportion of the inmates, and in a prison containing six hundred and fifty, I have often found the punishment cells empty, and the utmost order and regularity prevailing.

With the exception of the confirmed criminals, to whom work of any kind appears distasteful, prisoners seem glad of some employment, and it therefore becomes of much importance to occupy them in a way adapted to their physical powers and former callings. For example, a man who may be apparently in good health, but unaccustomed to much muscular exertion, cannot be expected to perform the work of a navvy; but when in the same party, no distinction is possible. Selection is there-

fore necessary to guard against injury to health, as the wasting consequent on such over-exertion has in some instances been very great. It would no doubt be difficult to find employment in a prison adapted to the former condition and occupation of all the inmates; but it would be a great advantage to carry out the system as well as circumstances would permit, in justice to the public and in a remunerative point of view. Many of the convicts are skilled workmen, able to earn high wages, and these men may be seen as industrious in prison as in a state of freedom; and when good conduct is combined with industry, it might be well to give them some additional reward as an encouragement to themselves and an example to others. This would help to excite a little emulation, whereas at present the same sum is allowed to all on their discharge. To prevent abuse, the sums ought to be dependent on the directors' investigation. This mode of encouragement need not be confined to this class, as the unskilled workman may be equally entitled to consideration by good conduct and industry, and especially by a desire to learn some trade likely to prove useful on his liberation.

The short period devoted to labour in our prisons is sometimes noticed as being less than in the cases of ordinary workmen, the fact being overlooked that the prisoners are constantly under supervision, and that their guards require a little time for meals.

The amount of nourishment also is only sufficient to keep them in health, and comes far short of the food of the free labourer doing laborious work, such as a navvy, who is said to consume a large quantity of animal food as well as porter, whereas the prisoner has only a moderate allowance of the one and none of the other. A uniform diet cannot justly be maintained in prisons; for in the case of men undergoing great physical exertion more nourishment is required to counteract the wear and tear of the system.

Convicts have, however, many advantages as regards preservation of health compared with ordinary workmen. All the sanitary arrangements of a prison are so constantly attended to, and the system of inspection is so completely organized, that any injury resulting from excess of work or insufficient food is most unlikely to escape the notice of the medical officer. Hence our prisons will bear comparison in point of health with any establishments in the country, and prisoners received in a weakly and emaciated condition are often discharged in robust health. This fact is so well known to certain old and hardened criminals that they even commit crime with the view of getting into prison to recruit their exhausted energies for fresh courses of depredation. Such prisoners in general display great indifference to their position, and quietly settle down to their former employment; and they not unfrequently make themselves very

useful as cleaners and in such like occupations. Men of this description are fortunately not very numerous; and in dealing with the less depraved among them it is of the utmost importance to find means of employment which will help to reimburse the State for their support during their imprisonment, and be likely to prove beneficial to them when restored to liberty. There are ample means for the employment of robust men accustomed to hard labour, on the public works, with advantage to themselves as well as to the country. But others who have not been used to a laborious life, and who are undergoing sentence for their first crime, having formerly been in an easy position, succumb to the severe toil. Without a proper and careful classification such men may not be brought to the notice of the medical officer until they show signs of failing health, such failure being observed by the officer in charge, or detected at the periodical monthly inspection. As the medical officer is held responsible for the mental and bodily health of the prisoners, his duties are far more serious than is generally supposed; and as he has the best means of forming a correct estimate of the capabilities of the prisoners for work, he ought to be consulted in the first place as to their fitness for the various kinds of labour.

As there are many prisoners physically unfit for labourer's work, there is a necessity for adding to the prison occupations. I have before alluded to

prisoners remarking that they were unable to read or write until they got into prison, and that they were evidently pleased with their accomplishment; but if they had the additional advantage of learning a remunerative trade, they would be less likely to return to their criminal courses.

As reformation ought to be the principal object in view in dealing with prisoners, the various occupations would require to be not only suitable to the men's capacity, but likewise as much as possible to their taste. This suggestion is not prompted by any desire to pamper criminals, but by the knowledge that a little encouragement is in most cases far preferable to compulsion. It is also important to show these prisoners that their labour is fully appreciated; for it is no unusual circumstance to see a prisoner executing a piece of work requiring skill and ingenuity with as much interest as if he were receiving full remuneration for it. Simple punitive labour, such as turning a crank or shot drill, appears of very doubtful efficacy, and is unlikely to be followed by any permanent good. Both punishments are of a nature to sour the temper, and give rise to the feeling that their labour is not being applied to any useful purpose; whereas if they were cognizant of some good result, they would be encouraged to persevere, and would feel an interest in what they were doing, nor would the occupation ultimately prove less deterrent.

To carry out this view, it would be necessary to add considerably to the present workshops for various kinds of handicraft, with warders capable of instructing and directing the prisoners. The expense might be urged as an objection ; but that need not be very great, as prison labour is available for the construction of the buildings, and the value of the labour, even if confined to the requirements of the government, and so not infringing on free labour, ought to compensate for any necessary expenditure. But the great and paramount advantage would consist in instructing the prisoners in a useful and remunerative trade, as a means of support when set at liberty. They would not be cast adrift in the world without the capacity of earning their livelihood in an honest way.

The average proportion of prisoners of all classes unfit for laborious work will always be rather high, and like the invalid class will form a sort of encumbrance when compared with the robust convicts performing work of great public utility. They, however, require equal attention in order to utilize their labour, so as to assist in their maintenance in prison and prove a means of support on their discharge.

On the whole, the means adopted for the treatment and reformation of the convict population are very praiseworthy, and cannot fail to exercise a powerful influence in the suppression of crime.

The probationary period, which affords a favourable opportunity of improving the mental condition, followed by the subsequent confinement in labour prisons, where they are provided with some suitable occupation and accustomed to habits of industry, cannot fail to make some permanent impression. The order, regularity, and cleanliness too, as carried out in our convict prisons, as well as the attention paid to health, must influence them for good in after life. The contaminating tendency of prison life is often dwelt upon; but most of the inmates of a convict prison have previously been leading such evil lives, and associating with such depraved characters, that they can have little to learn in the way of vice and depravity. The efforts made in prison to reform them must go some way to counterbalance the bad effects of criminal association, so that we may reasonably expect the greater number of prisoners to be discharged from prison in a better condition than when they entered it.

Although I am in favour of a mild and encouraging system, with a view to the improvement of the moral and physical condition of convicts, I also desire to see the strictest discipline carried out, so as to suppress any tendency to insubordination or disobedience to prison rules.

The system of a preparatory prison, so much advocated some years ago, with a view of allowing convicts, on the eve of their discharge, many indulgences

in the shape of improved dietary, greater liberty, and increased remuneration for work, might be carried too far ; for prisoners undergoing sentences for crimes more or less heinous have no right to expect luxuries, or anything more than kind and generous treatment, as long as they are industrious and amenable to other rules of the prison. By making the closing period of imprisonment agreeable, the deterrent effect must be greatly impaired. The plan adopted in an English convict prison is humane and reasonable, for it includes increased facilities for communicating with friends, with some changes in the dietary and clothing, by which the convicts are gradually prepared for liberty. On discharge, they are dressed in a suit of clothing in keeping with their former calling or position in life, and their gratuity is either paid in full, or, if in part, to defray the expenses of their journey home, with an order for the balance payable at the place of destination. When prisoners avail themselves of that excellent institution the Prisoners' Aid Society, every assistance is afforded them in procuring some suitable employment.

CHAPTER IX.

HABITUAL AND CASUAL CONVICTS.

ON taking a retrospective view of my long connection with the service, it is satisfactory to reflect on the improvements that have from time to time taken place under the humane and enlightened administration of the successive Chairmen of the Convict Department, tending alike to the improvement of prison discipline and to the reclamation of prisoners. The means adopted for carrying out this last object have no doubt been successful in saving a large proportion of discharged convicts from reverting to their former career of vice and misery.

There still remains to be dealt with a class who may not inappropriately be termed permanent criminals, or, as they have been styled, regular performers in crime. After repeated convictions, these men appear to be so thoroughly debased and hardened as to resist any system of treatment. Some who are in this hopeless condition may be deserving of much sympathy, for they have been inured to

vice and crime from childhood, after, perhaps, inheriting the criminal propensity. Others, again, may labour under some defect, such as blindness or lameness, or being so degenerate in body or in mind as to be unable to earn a livelihood, though quite capable of committing many criminal acts, or, what is even worse, of corrupting others by their teaching or bad example. For such men, and I may add for women, who by their frequent convictions show a determination to persist in their evil courses, and for whom prison discipline and every other method hitherto adopted for their reclamation have proved altogether abortive, it is an act of simple justice to the respectable and industrious—and, I may add, to men and women undergoing imprisonment for the first time for such offences as serious assaults when in a state of drunkenness, for forgeries, or for other dishonest practices prompted perhaps by unforeseen misfortune—to free them from the annoyance of these habitual criminals, and in such a way as to aid in the suppression of crime.

To this class of casual offenders, as distinguished from habitual criminals, the punishment inflicted by imprisonment is much more severe under the most favourable circumstances, but must be greatly intensified by association with the worst characters. Means have recently been taken to obviate this defect, by keeping the prisoners convicted for the

are associated with them, I have from to in my letters and reports, and have complete separation. This became about the year 1863, as the number had increased to about one hundred the cases were such as to cause great histories of these men previously to gleaned from the reports forwarded that they had been troublesome and and that the usual discipline had pro The term "weak-minded" does not idea of the class of which I am treating some were merely eccentric and generally tractable, others evinced well-marked insanity—such as general insubordination and filthy habits, and sometimes at suicide. One man under observation inflicted a deep vertical wound in the a piece of sharpened iron, and, while from his wound, was discovered trying self from the bar of his cell window detected, he said, as he was unable to opening his belly, he would do it by

To frustrate attempts at suicide, the lance is at all times necessary, for by malingers without any serious sometimes prove fatal.

In some instances these men assume a tedious, overbearing manner, often t

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first time in a ward by themselves, with a separate yard for exercise.

This procedure must be of special importance to the youthful and simple-minded, who are likely to be led astray by the conversation of men who glory in their misdeeds, and have the wit to give a clever clothing to them. As it is no easy matter to keep the uninitiated in crime quite apart from the other prisoners in one large establishment, it would be a great advantage to set apart a separate building for their use.

As to the class of habitual criminals, I am disposed to advocate their transference, on their discharge, to a refuge, instead of placing them under police supervision. Such a course would prove more effectual in averting crime, and also more deterrent. This would, it is true, be imprisonment in a modified form; but by allowing increased comforts and an improved dietary, with due encouragement to industry, it would work well. It would surely be a more humane procedure than to allow these people to return to their haunts of vice and misery and to resume their pilfering habits. The expense of keeping these men and women secluded would be much less than that caused by the resumption of their vagrant and pilfering habits, and under skilful management they might even be made in some measure self-supporting. As the treatment of these people would be much the same as that of an ordinary asy-

lum, it might also serve as an intermediary or probationary stage, and a test of their fitness to be set at liberty. Of that fitness, experienced and independent visitors would be the best judges.

Having been attached to invalid prisons throughout my long service, I had ample opportunities of investigating the various diseases and infirmities which form the ground of invaliding, or of the unfitness of the convicts to earn a livelihood when discharged from prison. It was therefore with regret that I saw these men turned adrift with very limited means to convey them to their homes or to the workhouse. This consideration induced me long ago, in one of my annual reports, to recommend the transference of helpless invalids and irreclaimable prisoners to a place of safety and security, as a proceeding humane to themselves, and, what is at least equally important, as rescuing the community at large from great annoyance, expense, and even danger.

And here I desire again to express my conviction of the importance of a measure now being carried into effect—I mean the separation of the habitual criminal class from casual convicts. Habitual criminals, when not undergoing sentence in prison, depend on doles, or indulge their criminal propensities by acts of theft, mischief, and outrage, having an inordinate dislike to earning a livelihood by honest industry. To carry out such a plan of

separation, a modified system of imprisonment and discipline would be required ; but it would at the same time be desirable to hold out greater encouragement to work, as not only advantageous to the prisoner himself, but also as tending to make him in some measure self-supporting. The last consideration is perhaps of less importance when we consider that this class while at large, indulging in thieving and all sorts of evil courses, entail a far greater expense on the community than would suffice for their support in prison. The same considerations apply to prisoners undergoing various sentences, who, during their seclusion, free the community from much danger and annoyance, to say nothing of ulterior advantages.

CHAPTER X.

WORK, EDUCATION, AND PUNISHMENT OF CRIMINALS.

I HAVE still some observations to make on the work, education, and punishment of prisoners, though in treating these subjects I run some risk of repetition.

1. *Work.*—A careful classification of prisoners is very desirable as regards their fitness for different kinds of employment. Owing to the great diversity in their physical and mental condition, this work of separation naturally devolves on the medical man, a tax both on his knowledge and experience. He must be well acquainted with their physical condition, for some of the seemingly robust may be labouring under chest affections, which during some violent exertion may suddenly prove fatal; while others, from various bodily ailments and defects, advanced age, and prolonged sedentary occupations, are only capable of a moderate amount of exertion. It would be most unreasonable to expect from such men the same amount of work as from those be-

longing to the labouring class, especially the section of that class which works out of doors. But by adopting a good classification, there would be not only less risk of endangering health, but the labour itself would prove more remunerative.

In making these remarks I do not mean to imply that these matters have been overlooked ; but as they are of the utmost importance, it would be desirable to have them more strictly carried out. In the case of those employed on the hardest kind of work—such as excavating docks, quarrying, brick-making, and such like—a larger amount of food ought to be allowed to compensate for the wear and tear of the body. For it must be remembered that, as I have already remarked, when navvies are employed at the same description of work, they consume a large quantity of animal food as well as beer ; and I have often met with prisoners so emaciated as to be supposed to be labouring under consumption, but who with rest and suitable diet quickly regained their former health and strength.

2. *The Education of Prisoners.*—This subject ought to occupy a prominent place in the reformatory process, for its advantages cannot be over-rated, as it not only assists discipline, but fits the men for employment on their discharge.

I have met, as I have before stated, with many prisoners who were quite uneducated at the time of conviction, but who, by availing themselves of the

advantages afforded them by the chaplain and masters, were able to write their own letters correctly, and they took an evident pride in the work.

Education also gives them a taste for reading; and as the books allowed are both amusing and instructive, their time is profitably employed when shut up in their cells in the evening. There is undoubtedly a marked contrast in the behaviour of educated prisoners, and those who have formerly occupied a good position in life, when compared with men who have been leading irregular and miserable lives—such as vagrants tramping the country at the expense of the foolish alms-giving people—and others taken from the lowest parts of our large manufacturing towns. These for the most part show a great disinclination for work; while those men who have been in a good position are amenable to discipline, and rarely show any dissatisfaction with their treatment or their food. The others often prove troublesome, and show great indifference to confinement and dietary punishment.

3. *Punishments*.—Dietary and other punishments, when often repeated, appear to be little felt by men sleeping away their time in a cell. The stomach appears to adapt itself to the want of food; but the health in time suffers. As these men are very sensitive to bodily pain, a few stripes of the birch would prove both more deterrent and less injurious.

In giving this opinion, I may remark that I am not in favour of corporal punishment where it can be avoided; but for persistent insubordination, idleness, destructiveness, and threats of violence, followed occasionally by assaults, no other punishment is available.

In dealing with a large body of prisoners, varying very much in character and disposition, it becomes necessary for those in authority to treat them as much as possible individually. This may be attended with difficulty in the large able-bodied prisons, but in a close or invalid prison it is possible to carry it out more effectually. Even in an able-bodied prison, where the inmates for the most part are healthy robust men, it becomes necessary for the medical officer to watch with care the effect of the various kinds of labour on the health, so as to be able to suggest such changes as may be necessary for its preservation, whether in the form of change of labour or removal to some other prison.

The sanitary arrangements also require his attention, and when prisoners are undergoing punishment he has to watch the effect, so that the health may not suffer. He also has a difficult and responsible duty to perform in the treatment of the various ailments coming under his observation, so as to discriminate accurately between the really sick and the malingerer, whose schemes, in his determina-

tion to evade labour, are often difficult of detection ; so that while he is bound on the one hand to treat with the greatest kindness and humanity the genuine sufferer, he is on the other obliged to use his utmost efforts to check imposition.

This is a matter of far more difficulty than is generally supposed, and medical men are most unjustly blamed and criticised, and even considered wanting in humanity, when they are only conscientiously discharging a very delicate and important duty, entailing great anxiety and responsibility.

The reports which the medical officers are called upon from time to time to furnish relative to the health of prisoners also require much care and consideration, especially in the case of the invalid class, who are labouring under various bodily and mental ailments, requiring the constant attention of the medical officer under whose charge they are placed, and for whose treatment he is responsible.

If under these circumstances he is not allowed to make such arrangements for the comfort and well-being of the invalids as in his own judgment are required, his energies must be crippled and his usefulness curtailed.

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